

I am a 71 year old female 911 police dispatcher with severe arthritis in both knees, shoulder and various other parts of my body. My problem with my arthritis is I have a severe allergy to aspirin. If I ingest any aspirin product I get hives so bad that I end up hospitalized for the swelling . My tongue swells and can cut off my oxygen supply to my body. The only medicine I can take is Tylenol for the pain which after prolonged use can cause kidney problems. I found an article regarding medical marijuana for this pain and decided to become a patient . Unfortunately three months after applying for my card and my first attempt to grow my own medicine my home was raided.in August of 2010. They ripped up my 18 plants that both my husband and I were growing for our own use. He also had arthritis and required surgery to replace his hip in September 2010. and was a patient. My husband died as a result of the raid on our home of a heart attack and I was charged with the growing of marijuana. I live in Oakland County and was not allowed to present the Medical Marijuana defense in court. I am now a convicted felon after being on the other side of the law for over 28 years working for the police department, and a widow after 45 years of a beautiful marriage. My case is now being appealed in Appeals Court. Barbara Agro

Beverly Carney beverlyc0303@yahoo.com to me

show details Feb 20

Having Crohn's disease and Fibromyalgia has rendered me nearly housebound. It takes tremendous effort to do remedial tasks at times. There are a great many days where my appetite is non-existent, and when I am able to eat it causes severe pain and nausea. I have been hospitalized numerous times, been down to 85lbs and at death's door more than once. None of the treatments offered by my health care providers have had any positive effect and have in most cases had detrimental ones. The ONLY thing that allows me to eat and function without pain is Marijuana. To take this right to live a semi-comfortable life away from me (and others who are in worse condition than I) is beyond cruel. The voters of this state have spoken. Those elected MUST comply with our wishes. Not the wishes of BIG PHARMA and lobbyists. To do otherwise is unacceptable and I will personally make it my mission to attempt a recall of any representative/elected official who opposes what the people have already voted for.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak. My name is Beverly Hynes. I am 53, but feel 20, thanks to medical marijuana. For years I suffered from debilitating back pain, caused by bone spurs on my spine, little to no cartilage in my lower back, and arthritis. While I gave birth naturally, without drugs, the pain experienced from my back was excruciating, and I did seek some relief. At one point the pain made me pass out, then get sick, before going to the emergency room. When I heard that they were thinking of putting a law on the ballot to make marijuana legal for those with chronic pain, I assisted with gathering signatures. I met numerous police officers who were in favor of this law. Why? Because they are on the "front lines" of our cities, and see the damage caused by alcohol, prescription narcotics, meth, crack, heroine. Many acknowledged that they believe marijuana is one of the most innocuous drugs available. I have tried all the usual prescription drugs, but they either made me lethargic, or gave me migraines. Medical marijuana has allowed me to maintain full time employment (Employee of the year in just 6 months at this job), bike ride and ice skate. I have seen, firsthand, the damage caused by prescription drugs. A co worker at another job missed, on average, one day of work, every week, due to her addiction to prescription pain meds. While at work she would pass out in her chair, phone in hand, trying to refill her meds that she "lost when they fell in the bathtub", for the 2nd time that week. Medical marijuana has had NO negative side effects for me, and I wish to continue to be able to have safe access to this natural medicine, without being persecuted.

Respectfully,

--

Beverly Hynes  
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Help free the innocent: [innocenceproject.org](http://innocenceproject.org).

Civil Liberties-Don't leave home without them: [www.aclumich.org](http://www.aclumich.org).

How can we help the homeless mentally ill? [www.pathwaystohousing.com](http://www.pathwaystohousing.com).

Hello, my name is Brian Hamilton. I am a medical MJ Patient and a care giver.

In the spring of 2009 I got into a very bad motorcycle accident because of the SUV in front of me had no working tail lights or turn signals.

As a result of this accident I broke my pelvis in 2 locations. I was prescribed Vicodin & OxyContin for pain.

I was bedridden for 2 months, then worked my way up to a wheelchair, then a walker, then crutches, then a cane. The doctor told me I would probably use a walker for a very long time because of my weight and size.

All the while he just kept prescribing me Vicodin & OxyContin.

Let me tell you this, I was off all prescribed pain drugs after just 3 months, not by my doctor's choice, if I left it up to him I would still be on Vicodin & OxyContin.

I got off of those drugs because I found the pain relief in medical marijuana.

You see I have no health insurance to pay for the expensive prescribed drugs. And once the insurance company from my accident stopped paying for the prescribed drugs after the doc said I'm able to walk on my own, I was alone but still hurting.

Medical marijuana works.

Please, leave the medical marijuana act alone. It's working, and it's working great. The farmers market that the MMMA has setup is a perfect working example on how this law should be followed. It's for patients, not high dollar for profit dispensaries just out to get rich.

Sincerely,

Brian Hamilton

I am writing this letter to give testimony on how medical marijuana has improved my quality of life. I am in a position to testify not only to my own situation as a patient, but to my position as a family member of a patient, friend of a caregiver, and as a concerned father. First I would like to describe my first-hand experiences with medical marijuana.

I used marijuana for the first time last month. Prior to using it as a pain reliever for my back, I have never smoked a cigarette, tried any illegal narcotics, or even tasted alcohol. The closest I have come to using any substance at the point in fact, was using a hooka a handful of times in college, and only using it with flavored tobacco. I suffer from severe and debilitating spinal pain. The discs in my upper and lower back become inflamed for a reason that is at this time completely unknown to myself or my doctors. I do not have anything resembling a decent income, and no insurance. The next step in trying to find out what is causing my back pain is a series of tests and scans, and the least expensive test is going to cost me \$2500.

This large bill does not do anything to help my pain. After paying for these tests, my doctors tell me I may not even have an answer as to what is causing the inflammation. If it does in fact show them the cause, there will be further expenses involved in fixing the problem... that is... if it can even be fixed. My doctors have told me that if the tests come back with an answer, there is only a 50% chance I will even be able to do anything to cure the inflammation and relieve the pain. I have been prescribed several different narcotic pain relievers, which all came with horrible side effects. I have suffered from extreme nausea, periods of time where when under the influence of the pain pills my head was so foggy I could not do anything productive, dizziness, depression, thoughts of suicide, and the list goes on.

About a month ago I tried medical marijuana to see what its effect on me would be. To my surprise, the pain was gone, my spine felt like it was moving more freely, I felt less depressed than I have been recently, and most importantly... I was able to pick my daughter up off of the floor without pain. I was able to take care of my daughter for the first time in months. She is currently 10 months old, and my inability to lift her most days has added to my depression. In addition to all of these benefits of using medical marijuana, I was able to do so without any negative side effects.

My uncle suffers from arthritis in his wrists. He is also deaf. Without being able to medicate with medical marijuana, he is left with two options, being unable to communicate, or communicate and suffer through the pain. I am the friend of a caregiver. He grows medication for three patients, charging only enough to cover his costs. He is a genuinely honest and good person, and he also volunteers his time to help his friends and family without any expectation of personal gain. As previously stated, I am also a concerned father. What will happen if I lose the freedom to use the only medication that I have found which will enable me to be the father I want to be. Or worse yet, what if I continue to use my medication and I get into trouble with the police for doing nothing other than what I am legally allowed to do because of the MMMA.

I have decided to keep my identity, and the identity of my friend and family member anonymous for a reason. There have been numerous incidences of patients following the guidelines outlined by the MMMA and still being arrested, ticketed, having had their plants taken, and more by the police. You, as the representatives of the people of the state of Michigan need to keep in mind that the MMA was in fact passed by the people of Michigan in a 2/3 majority. The people have spoken, and demonstrated their acceptance of marijuana as a medicine. It is now time for you to defend their decision, and defend the rights granted to us by the passing of the MMMA.

February 20, 2012

Dear Representatives and members of the Committee,

I am a registered pharmacist in the State of Michigan and have been dispensing medication and advice to patients for over 40 years. My first concern is to advise patients what is their best choice to treat their illness. When cancer patients are getting chemo they are nauseated, feel terrible, and have no appetite they have the choice of pharmaceuticals that are ineffective and costly, or they can use marijuana with next to no side effects when dosed correctly. The same is true for many diseases such as back pain, shingles, and on and on.

The point of this whole mess is that the majority of voters in Michigan have said let these patients have relief and a safe source of marijuana, but a few self-righteous people say "No"

Marijuana like alcohol can be used or abused. How can you stop "binge" drinking, alcoholism, or people from getting drunk ? The government can never stop alcohol or marijuana, it tried to stop alcohol and created a terrible crime network and is now doing the same for marijuana. There is no legislative solution or police force big enough to control it. Be responsible !

**THE BEST SOLUTION IS TO HELP THE PEOPLE OF MICHIGAN HAVE ACCESS TO MARIJANA THAT IS GROWN LOCALLY BY SOMEONE THEY KNOW AND TRUST. IT IS DANGEROUS FOR THESE PATIENTS TO HAVE TO BUY IT ON THE "STREET" FROM A SOURCE THAT WHO KNOWS WHAT IT CONTAINS, AND SUPPORTING THE MEXICAN DRUG CARTEL. PLEASE HELP KEEP THE PATIENTS IN MICHIGAN WITH A SAFE SOURCE OF MARIJANA, AND BANKRUPT THE CARTEL AT THE SAME TIME !**

Sincerely,

Charles Kinzel, R.Ph

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231-882-0156

Hello, my name is Tim Ratliff

I am a caregiver and patient, I suffer from silent migraines that get so severe I have gone to the emergency room. I have had a CAT scan and MRI done at Troy Beaumont, at first they thought I had a stroke but after testing they diagnosed me with silent migraines. I live in Lapeer County where McLaren health system doesn't allow their doctors to subscribe medical marijuana to any of their patients no matter what the doctors belief is. For this reason I have to go to a doctor that is not my primary doctor to get a prescription. When I use the medical marijuana my symptoms like nausea and sensitivity to light go away. Without having a choice of medical marijuana I would still be suffering from my symptoms because the other scripts that I had tried in the past had given worsening symptoms especially nausea. I had never used this wonderful herb until after I had gotten sick. I couldn't imagine life without it now. I have had very few migraines since I started medical use of marijuana.

IT HAS GIVEN ME MY LIFE BACK!

Thanks

p.s. feel free to fact check me!

To all it may concern,

I am a 55 year old legal medical cannabis card holder and I am a law abiding citizen. In fact, I have had only one minor traffic ticket at the age of 21 years old, if one were to check my record.

After suffering for around 20 years, I have been using medical cannabis for fibromyalgia pain for about three years now, with positive results. This is in support by my psychiatrist and doctor. Both doctors are unable to write a medical cannabis recommendation for me, from fear of poorly written Michigan law, which jeopardizes their medical practice. Thus, I must seek a doctor who specializes in writing cannabis recommendations, which makes it difficult for me, as I have to travel to Kalamazoo, MI.

For the first time in my life, I started using cannabis at the age of 52 years old. I now have three years of hands on experience with cannabis. I am extremely disturbed and disappointed with our government lying to us all the many years about cannabis being a harmful evil drug, when it is far from the truth. I am furious that our law makers are trying to make it difficult for me, to be able to obtain safe-lab tested cannabis from a dispensary for my condition. I do not want to be forced to go to the street to look for my medicine, as it could possibly have pesticides or mold which is harmful to my health. I am not able to grow cannabis because of my illness. I once had a caregiver, but that person stopped growing because of pressure with Federal law.

I can easily go to a pharmacy to get my prescribed pills, but dispensaries for cannabis is suppose to be wrong? My life is already extremely difficult enough to get through the day. Why am I being discriminated against because I am physically ill and need cannabis to help my condition? I am NOT a criminal!

Sincerely,

Daniel L. Taylor Sr.  
Zeeland, MI



# David Imler

Coloma, Berrien county, Michigan

I am a 54 yr old man with some serious health issues and medical Marijuana and the ability to grow it have given me some of the dignity I lost when I was suddenly disabled 10 years ago, I was working 60 hours a week when an unknown illness nearly struck me dead! I was unable to work at all after discovering I was suffering from cardiomyopathy. Cardiomyopathy is a heart disease that causes the heart muscle to enlarge within the sack or pericardium surrounding the heart, and creating a condition where the heart is unable to contract and expand enough to adequately pump blood to the body. The condition is usually fatal before being discovered, as it is uncommon in people under 65. The common measure for the condition is known as ejection fraction or EF. This is the measure of blood in the heart that is pumped or ejected when the heart beats or contracts. Normal EF for a 45 yr. old white male is about 60%, and at the time of discovery, my EF was slightly over 10%. After having a defibrillator/pacer installed, and the proper medications, I have managed to improve to about 30% now. But along the way, due to a forced, sedentary lifestyle and heredity, I have also developed type 2 diabetes. I have also spent several months at 5 different times hospitalized for acute pancreatitis that nearly killed me 3 times. This is brought on by high triglycerides due to diabetes, NOT alcohol consumption! I have NOT consumed alcohol in over 10 yrs. But this has left me with chronic pancreatitis which can be extremely painful! The last bout, 2 yrs. ago was 36 days at a place called LTAC pronounced el-tack. This is the last stop for people who are dying to finish out their life with in hospital acute care. In fact that is their name, Long Term Acute Care, or LTAC, and they pretty much wrote me off! I was on a Morphine pump with a bolus pump every ten minutes! I was allowed an extra dose in a bolus or large dose if I pushed the plunger every ten minutes, on top of the drip! I was also allowed 10 mg of Toradol every 6 hours as needed! This was my pain management at the time. After more than a month there and no food by mouth I was finally allowed popsicles and ice cream, etc. to start with. Finally, I was discharged with a daily maintenance dose of Morphine for pain management of 75 mg, 3 times a day, along with Lyrica twice a day for diabetic neuropathy in my feet. Since then I have had my gallbladder and over 30 gallstones removed and suffer from chronic pancreatitis and severe nausea when I eat. I have lost over 50 pounds since the last hospitalization because I cannot eat without vomiting and diarrhea. With all this, I have been on Morphine and Dilaudid continuously for several years and it only gets worse. I am given the occasional respite from the harsh narcotics by smoking medical marijuana, but being on disability, I cannot afford the cost of dispensaries at \$10, or \$20 or more per gram. I can grow my own for considerably less than that, and know exactly what I am

getting from seed to finish. I can grow the strains best suited to treating MY problems and for considerably less money! I think dispensaries are a much needed fill-in or temporary stop-gap if your caregiver has issues that prevent your medical marijuana being provided by them. However, their wish to be the ONLY supplier or grower allowed is just another way for legislators to pass laws that are NOT what the Michigan VOTERS wanted, nor is it good for the patients it is supposed to help! If the only place to get medical marijuana is at a dispensary, I would seldom be able to afford them, thereby making this medication out of reach for me and thousands of other poor and disabled Michigan residents! If they cannot afford it, the law becomes just another perk for rich and well to do middle and upper class citizens NOT the common man who worked his life away only to be excluded from the club again when he needs access to what the voters have decided is legal in Michigan! Currently I am able to sample various strains to find the proper strains that help my condition best and grow those only, and they are within my ability to grow for myself! If I were to depend on a dispensary, not only would I NOT be able to afford the meds very often, I would rarely find the strain that works best for me, so I would be at the mercy of whatever the dispensary has available at the time when I can afford to pay \$20 a gram for medical marijuana! THIS was NOT what the voters had in mind for Michigan residents when they passed the law! This new law would change everything in favor of the dispensaries and make money for them and NOT serve the SICK patients in Michigan! Keep my Medication at MY home, NOT paying for a dispensary owner's HOME! I also have the added benefit of therapy in the gardening for clinical depression due to pain medication addiction! Working frequently in my grow is very therapeutic and physically gratifying in a sedentary lifestyle like I am forced into by heart disease and diabetes! Many sick patients are in similar circumstances, and due to financial restrictions cannot afford to use dispensaries for a primary caregiver, so they need to be their own primary caregiver! The law should NOT take this right away from us and make Medical Marijuana unavailable to me, and others in similar circumstances! The people of the state of Michigan would NOT want this! Thank you for listening.

To the Representatives of the Judiciary Committee,

I had recurrent bladder cancer. I was given ONE intravenous chemo treatment that literally destroyed my bladder.

The doctors said they didn't know what went wrong and that I was the 1% that has an adverse reaction to the chemical. (MSDS sheet of Mitomycin is 7 pages long) They had nothing in their medicine bag to help fix what modern medicine destroyed. I almost died from the treatment, not the disease. If it were not for the natural healing ability of THC my bladder would not have healed. I went for a 2nd opinion, and after 2 years of visits that oncologist said this: "when you came to me your bladder looked like a mine field, it is so much better now. What do you think is doing it?"

I told him it was the THC, because I am not super human.

It is the THC that I am ingesting that is repairing the damage. My cancer is also in remission.

THC is medicine.

GOOD medicine, NO horrifying side effects!

Dennis Alsop  
Lakeport, MI  
(810) 334-8454

February 26, 2012

To: Everyone willing to keep an open mind to the Health Benefits of CANNABIS

From: Dennis L. Reott  
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Subject: Testimony of my Personal Health Benefits using Cannabis

I am a 61 yr old, Vietnam Veteran (1969-1975) U.S. Navy, Nuclear Powered Submarine Program, Interior Communication First Class Petty Officer, SSN. I am a member of the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 58, Detroit, MI and worked as a Journeyman Inside Wireman until December, 2005. I am permanently disabled and suffer from bone pain, nerve pain, and frequent muscle spasms.

My Problems started in the early 90's with a very sore right knee. I went to the Doctor and was sent to a specialist and received injection for the pain , along with a list of pain and anti-inflammatory meds. In 2004, the specialist suggested total right knee replacement. In December of 2004, the pain was unbearable and I agreed to the surgery. I had the total right knee replacement surgery in March of 2005. I returned to work in November and could not handle the weight bearing on my right knee. I returned to the specialist and after extensive testing, he determined the metal pin in the tibia bone was loose. I was informed the only way to correct the problem was to perform another total knee replacement on the right knee. In May of 2006, my right knee was replaced again. I continued to have problems with weight bearing on the right knee and the specialist said it would just take time. Therapy and pain killers became my way of life. In June of 2007, my specialist sent me to another specialist. My specialist then suggested I find another specialist because he was out of options.

I had my records transferred to University of Michigan and they began more testing. I was then informed there was no way to correct the condition short of a total knee replacement on the right knee because the pin in the tibia was loose. I couldn't believe I was going to have to do this the third time. Surgery scheduled for May 2008. After returning home from surgery and being on blood thinners, the incision burst open during physical home therapy and 911 was called. They came and eventually stopped the bleeding by applying pressure on my knee. The next day while attempting to stand, the right quadricep muscle ripped and my right knee buckled. I returned to the University of Michigan for surgery to reattach the muscle. They were now administering Oxycontin and Oxycodone for the pain. I went to extensive physical therapy and ended up in a wheel chair because I could not put

weight on my right leg for long and my right knee would just buckle under my weight. The pain in the tibia bone and the tibia muscle required me to keep my leg elevated. I suffered from extreme shooting pains along the tibia up to the knee cap. This pain was constant and unrelenting. Due to the drugs, my entire body was in a mess and my mind was totally messed up. I existed with no will for anything.

In November of 2008, I contacted the University of Michigan and told my doctor I thought I was dying. I just had no will to live. My brain seemed like mush with no interconnecting thoughts. I was scared and the only thing I had was the Oxycontin regiment for pain. My doctor sent me to the pain clinic and a doctor there told me I had to get off the drugs and I should investigate alternative medicine for the pain. I was sent back to the surgeon and further testing proved I had a loose pin in the tibia and it would require total knee replacement with a new type of pin in the tibia, which might distribute the load correctly and possibly reduce my pain level, but short of the operation, he could do nothing.

I began researching alternative medicines on my computer and found info on the Michigan Medical Marijuana Program. I was linked to Granny's list thru one of the web sites, this was an alphabetical listing of research on cannabis and I eventually ended up on a web site "phoenixtears.ca". I watched the video "Running from the cure" by Rick Simpson. After reviewing the videos and letters on this site many times and listening to testimonies from many individuals on the benefits of cannabis in treating pain, I contacted my primary doctor and told him I would like to try using the cannabis oil and needed his recommendation. He informed me that he knew very little about it. I started printing a lot of the information available on the Endocannabinoid System and research by the University of California, and eventually he decided to sign the recommendation. I remained under his care and he monitored my condition monthly. I was accepted into The MMMP, May 2009, and harvested my first successful crop of cannabis in late October 2009 and by mid November 2009 completed my first batch of Rick Simpson Oil.

My body weight was 285 lbs, up 50 lbs from my normal weight, and my doctor put me on Meridia, trying to control the weight, I was still using Oxycontin for pain, anti-inflammatories for my knee, hypertension medicine, and constantly battling with constipation and terrible stomach pain.

I saw my primary doctor and informed him that I was starting to use the Rick Simpson Oil made from a strain of cannabis called White Widow from G13 labs. I started with a low oral dosage of approximately 1/10 of a ml per day for 1wk, then 2/10 of a ml for the second week, then 3/10 of a ml for the third week. I was very tired for the first two weeks, but by the end of the third week this effect wore off. I did a lot of sleeping the first two weeks and hardly took any of my pharmaceutical meds and decided to quit taking the Oxycontin. I suffered from extreme headaches for the next two weeks and found great relief from the headaches by vaporizing the cannabis material at temps up to 360 degrees Fahrenheit. For the bone pain, I would smoke a mixture of hash and the cannabis oil and I received almost immediate relief. The sharp spikes of nerve pain became more tolerable and by May of 2010, I felt I had regained my life. I no longer required any pharmaceuticals and I could think clearly. My doctor and friends were amazed, as was I, at this turn

of events. I discontinued usage of the weight loss medication because Rick Simpson said that the body would self regulate my body weight with very little exercise with the continued use of the cannabis oil. My body weight continued to drop and by December of 2010, I was 225 lbs and still not able to exercise much. I really felt great and my body functions were working again. No pain in my stomach, no constipation, normal blood pressure, good oxygen levels, good cholesterol levels and the vaporizing really deepened my ability to breathe. I hated using the wheelchair and used a walker more and more. In June of 2011, I met a man on a Segway, an electrical two wheeled mobility assistance device that has literally changed my life. I now can go anywhere I could in the wheelchair, except my face is not crotch height to the rest of the world and riding a Segway is really a lot of fun.

I continued to have my doctor monitor my success with the use of the Rick Simpson oil. All my body functions appear to be normal and the bone pain, nerve pain, and muscle spasms are manageable. I also use the oil topically to help reduce pain, heal burns, heal a 5" cut on my leg requiring stitches. The cuts and burns heal very clean, no infections, and the skin just looks healthy healing. Once again my doctor was amazed and said "You've done it again, you've healed yourself".

On November 13, 2011, I fell and my foot was trapped by a pallet and I hurt my ankle. I couldn't walk and the pain was severe. I immediately medicated with a ½ of ml of the oil and smoked a mixture of hash and the oil for the immediate relief of the pain. Keeping my foot raised and icing the affected right ankle, I was able to manage the pain. I also applied the oil topically on the ankle. After about an hour of rest, I stood up with the assistance of my walker. I placed weight on my right foot and although it hurt, it also felt good and I continued to exert pressure on the foot and it popped real loud. At first I thought, you really screwed up now and then a wave of good feeling came over me. I sat back down and the ankle really started to swell. I iced the ankle and took another ½ of a ml of the oil and called my doctor. The next day, he took x-rays and said I had broken it in 2 places. But everything seemed to be in place and it might heal but he recommended surgery to pin the ankle. I informed him I would like to pass on the surgery at this time and have him monitor the healing. If any problems arose then I would do the surgery. He placed my ankle in a walking boot to provide support. I informed him I was going to increase my daily dosage of oil to 1 ml per day because Rick Simpson said this dosage was effective in curing cancer and it should be able to help heal these breaks. I maintained a dosage of 1 ml for 45 days and returned to the doctor. New x-rays of the broken ankle showed it was healing and I had a full range of motion. I continued applying the oil topically and reduced my oral dosage to ½ of a ml. Other than the affects of the cold weather, everything seems to be doing fine.

The use of cannabis has definitely helped to control my pain, heal my cuts, bruising, bone breaks, and my quality of life is fantastic. To know I can deal with things again and help other people, if only to give them a glimmer of hope when no other hope exists, makes me proud that I have journeyed through the last 3 years with little guidance other than the information found on the website made available by the Michigan Medical Marihuana Association.



Dear Sirs and Madams:

I am a retired, 65 year old grandmother. I own my home and volunteer at CMU.

Two years ago I decided to enter into the Medical Marijuana program. I had severe back pain and could not use pharmaceutical grade pain killers as they cause extreme disorientation, constipation, and addiction. Standard painkillers such as Advil were hard on my stomach. Smoking marijuana nightly gives me the rest I need so I have far less pain. I have an x-ray that shows quite obviously the distress of my spine as it is curved and twisted. I have muscle spasms that pull my ribs out of alignment.

Both my grandfather and father were blinded by glaucoma and my mother and aunt also had the eye disease. Due to my consumption of marijuana my eye pressure is kept at a low level, though I will not stop using in order to prove the existence of glaucoma. It is not a cure, it is a deterrent. I would be unable to use glaucoma medicine drops in my eyes as I am hypersensitive and cannot use anything but saline in my eyes.

The use of the MM has not affected me adversely in any way, not even excess eating. It has helped some of my breathing troubles also. In the time I have used marijuana I have been creative, calm, happy, and productive.

If anything has affected me adversely, it has been the fear that I could be arrested for something the citizens of Michigan voted to allow me to do.

Sincerely,  
Ms Gareth d'Haillecourt  
9371 E. Battle Rd  
Clare MI 48617  
989-465-6965



Dear State Legislator,

I am writing in regard to the Medical Marihuana amendments that are being brought before the state house. Please don't strip this law. It is badly needed. On the contrary, it should be respected, as well as the citizens that voted this law into existence.

I am a 60 year old woman with a congenital spinal defect that has caused me excruciating pain since I was 12. I was admitted to the hospital at that time and a battery of tests were performed, but the results were inconclusive. For the next 30 years, I periodically experienced muscle spasms and pain, so severe, that I would be in bed for several days. I was unable to get up, to do little more than use the bathroom. I was misdiagnosed and told the back pain was a result of poor stomach muscles, (I weighed 100 lbs at the time and had no tummy) so I was prescribed muscle relaxers and a variety of pain medications that provided little to no relief, and caused many side effects. Constipation, irritability, and fatigue were the constant ones that accompanied every pain medication I tried. Finally at 43 I was diagnosed with degenerative disc and bone disease, primarily in my lower back and in my neck. It has left me totally disabled, I can no longer earn a living because of my affliction. The degenerating cartilage is throughout my body. I have lost 2 ¾ inches in height due to the deterioration. Bone grinds on bone in all my joints. That is quite a painful experience. A few years ago an MRI was done on my lower spine and it showed four fractured vertebrae, that had healed! My pain was always so severe that I didn't know I had even broken my back, I just assumed it was the normal pain I experienced from time to time!!

I also used to have bouts of depression that sometimes would be accompanied by thoughts of suicide. There were times when I couldn't function on a normal level to hold a job or keep friends or maintain a relationship. All the anti depressants I took also caused adverse side effects. I couldn't sleep, have a bowel movement, or enjoy sex, and was still depressed.

I began using medical marihuana 2 years ago, since then I have not had one issue of being in bed with my back, and my depression is manageable. I experience a great sense of well being 90% of the time now. And no more thoughts of suicide.

Marihuana has been given a bad reputation because of the stigma associated with the hippie generation. When in reality marihuana has been used medicinally for thousands of years. Until the prohibition of it, cannabis was in the majority of medicines.

I am an herbalist who firmly believes that marihuana is the most versatile herb in existence and no more harmful for you than valerian root or catnip. It has been proven to cure cancer and assist in pain management, and help those with mental and social issues, where conventional drugs have failed. But, more importantly, without life threatening side effects, physical addiction, or severe withdrawal upon cessation.

I personally know several people that have been helped with medical marihuana besides myself. My daughter-in-law has MS. Before she began using medical marihuana she would fall quite often, have to get around in a wheel chair, on occasion, and when not in the wheel chair she had to use a cane to walk. She is 32. She began using medical marihuana about 3 years ago and has sold her wheel chair and the cane stays in the closet most of the time. She has abandoned all of her other prescribed meds and has gotten her MS under control.

I have a nephew that is bipolar, medical marihuana has helped him keep his emotions in check and not have the severe mood swings associated with it.

Far too many pharmaceuticals come with very frightening warnings. Nobody wants to die while trying to treat a nail fungus!! I see big pharma as a scheme to keep the American public on drugs. You are given a drug to help or cure an ailment which gives you a side effect, so you are given another medication to combat the side effect of the first drug, but then that one gives you another side effect so you are given another .... And so on, until each patient is on 4 or 5 different medications all of which have unnatural and severe side effects. All in the name of the almighty dollar and free enterprise. Unfortunately they see

Medical Marihuana as something that they can't make money off of so they are trying to keep it illegal. This is ludicrous, it's a plant that occurs in nature, it was given to us by nature to heal and assist, not be demonized and scorned. Those of us that have discovered the truth about Medical Marihuana, recognize the propaganda and are trying to educate the public to it's benefits instead.

Please don't take away our safe, effective Medical Marihuana. You were voted into office to do the will of the people of the state of Michigan and the will of 62% of us want to have safe access without fear of LEO's beating down our doors, to tear our homes apart, to find a small infraction of a law that we voted in. Bill Schuette is sending the wrong message when he is campaigning the law enforcement to go out and arrest innocent and sick victims. Yes, I said victims, we are in no way criminals. We just want to feel well and not fear reprisal, for our needs.

Now for the economic aspect of this issue. When this law was enacted compassion clubs and dispensaries flourished creating 60,000 jobs in our state. This was a boom to the economy. These 60,000 jobs are just the tip of the iceberg. There are the businesses that profit from the compassion clubs and dispensaries and growers. The power companies make money off the growers especially, as well as each shop that uses power. Grow shops make money off the grower, selling them fertilizers, soil and other needed equipment. Other businesses benefit from the money that is staying in the local communities. But closing the dispensaries and compassion clubs has the money going back to the Mexican cartel or other illegal sources. These illegal sources were all but dried up due to legal growers saturating the market and driving out the illegal drug dealers, you know the ones that will sell to your 12 year old without remorse. Dispensaries and compassion clubs on the other hand require that you be a legal card holder to obtain their product.

And speaking of the "legal card holder" issue I continue to see in the amendments that are being brought before the house. It seems that the state of Michigan can't keep up with demand for the cards, since they were equipped with machines that can only print 1400 cards a week, but receive many more application than that. So our attorney general feels he has an out there, if they can't get your legal card to you, then you can't be a "legal card holder" thus you are not legal, and subject to arrest. This is trickery by our attorney general and should not be allowed to continue with his campaign to force his beliefs and agenda on the citizens of the state of Michigan.

Regulate if you must but please don't gut this law.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Geralyn Reed

At 67 years old I am fighting Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, and serious heart arrhythmias and use Medical Cannabis for relief and productivity. The drug I use is more benign than aspirin, yet the War on Drugs threatens me even more than these horrible diseases.

Anything you can do to reduce the stress caused by fear of police would greatly improve my life. I can't fully express the fear I have of bully drug laws but it interferes with my much needed sleep. Please make me revere you instead of fear you by protecting the little freedom and control of my life that I have left? I am well-educated and a good citizen. I have never hurt anyone with Medical Cannabis in any way, nor do I know, nor have I ever heard of anyone who has.

I served as a county drug expert, who gave presentations, answered Help Line questions, trained Help Line Operators and counseled clients, including numerous heroin users. I authored an emergency guide to drug and alcohol overdose aid that sold nationally. Medical Cannabis is neither a health nor a safety problem and I challenge anyone to prove it needs more stringent controlling than alcohol. Since I can legally transport far more dangerous liquor, why not Medical Cannabis? What imagined harm am I doing? These Medical Cannabis thwarting laws are designed to make my difficult life even harder for punitive, mean-spirited reasons and using unconstitutional methods and police power to do it.

Medical Cannabis is helping people maintain healthier lives. I grow legal Medical Cannabis for myself and for a woman whose lower back is held together with stainless steel pins, rods, plates and screws. She's in pain most of the time and her face was wrinkled with a desperate look of a trapped animal when I first met her but now she looks better, reports more relief, ability to relax her back and a better, more productive life as an O.R. nurse. For her, Cannabis works better than Zoloft and narcotics but you're going to hurt us and cause real, life-long fear, pain, frustration, disability and loss of mobility and quality of life. You can make our lives so much better or so much worse. Please choose better?

My day starts with an injection of Copaxone for MS, a disease that is robbing me of walking, cutting our firewood, working, all recreation and most physical activity. I used to have a Michigan Residential Builder's License and was a self-employed computer consultant. It is very frustrating and frightening to lose control of your own muscles, memory and sense of touch but my biggest frustrations and fears come from a very dangerous bully cult in my own government. Please protect me?

By tampering with the will of the people, a majority who approved the Medical Cannabis referendum, you are causing great stress and health declines in the very people you say you wish to aid. The mean little controls on transporting medicine to our clients, exchanging seeds or genetics, etc. make our lives much more tiring, complex, effortful, and less successful in helping with these miserable illnesses. Plus they add a sickening element of fear and make us feel much more helpless, vulnerable and threatened than we already are. I view this to be a civil rights issue as well as a human compassion issue. Do you care more about our suffering or political prohibitions? Please ask yourself, "What kind of person am I?" Then, please help me and my clients, personally? Thank you,

Henry H. James - 11200 Bacon Rd. - Plainwell, MI 49080 - (269)664-5282

Hello and thank you for hearing my testimonial.

My name is James Shingola, 45 year old disabled American citizen. My ordeal started with a work related injury, in November 2004, I was deemed disabled by social security, I was 38 years old. I was told I needed an Anterior Cervical Discectomy fusion using a cadaver bone, I was screened for surgery and had no disease whatsoever.

After my 1st surgery I was diagnosed with Hepatitis C. I had to undergo a years worth of treatments that I would not have been able to endure if it wasn't for medical cannabis keeping the side effects in check. After my first week of treatment, my Dr. ordered blood work, and at 11:00 pm that night, my Dr called my phone and was very happy to inform me that "The Virus has left my body" and I was cured.

He also stated that in all the years he has been a Dr he never seen a patient respond to the treatment as quickly as I have, and that it was due to the fact that I used cannabis along with my treatment.

After a total of 13 surgeries to try to repair the rest of my damaged body, I was prescribed hydrocodone, then oxycodone, and now methadone to help with the pain from the nerve damage in my arms and the dead bones in my feet. As well as the degenerative disc disease in my back, and the radiculopathy coming from my injured neck.

I was so hooked on methadone that if I missed a dose, I would get sicker until I took that pill. I was so miserable from the pain and the narcotics that death was preferable, however I have family so I had to fight on.

My next step was medical cannabis again! I became a patient in the MI Medical Marijuana Program and within 1 week I was weened off the methadone and so relaxed from the cannabis that I could deal with the pain and not be an ornery burden to my wife and kids anymore. I now have a good quality life, I do get bi monthly cervical epidurals to help with the neck pain. Between the shots and the medical cannabis, my pain is not causing me to want to die anymore.

I also feel that cannabis is much safer than methadone as I do not have to worry about overdosing. I do not have to worry about thieves trying to steal my narcotics, I do not have to worry about dangerous prescription drugs in my home around my children, and I do not have to worry about destroying my organs with prescription drugs.

However, I do have to worry about some uninformed politician that thinks he is in charge of my body, and thinks I should still be hooked on narcotics. I am very saddened to know that the people that are in office to protect me and my rights are really wolves in sheep clothing, that are trying to hurt me. So I am asking that anyone in office that has any compassion for sick citizens to please help end this unjust, and unjustifiable attack on us by Bill Schuette.

Thank you.

James Shingola

Jenine L Kemp B.S.R.S., RT ( R) (M) (CT) (MR)  
1626 Kennedy Drive  
Lansing, MI 48911  
February 20, 2012

Michigan State Legislators  
Lansing, Michigan

Subject: Michigan Medical Marijuana Laws

Dear Lawmakers:

Please take a moment to hear my testimony. I want to let you know how medical marijuana has helped me. I am grateful for the right to be a medical marijuana patient.

I have a disease called Lupus. It is an autoimmune disorder that affects the whole body, causing inflammation. Upon my diagnosis four years ago, I could barely make it down the stairs in the morning because of pain. Today I am an active and fit individual.

In my case, lupus has caused problems with joints and spinal nerves. The pain from nerves is called neuropathy. My neuropathy was caused from a combination of the lupus and an injury sustained while lifting a heavy patient. The damage is permanent and the pain is continuous and severe. There are also several areas of arthritis which cause severe pain in my body, especially the knees which need to be replaced.

I did all the things my physician advised me to do. Lost fifty pounds, quit eating flour and sugar, started supplements, and several prescriptions were given. One prescription, Norco, is double strength and it is an addictive narcotic. My physician prescribed them by the hundred. I was fearful of addiction to the narcotics, and also of the kidney and liver damage they would cause. Lupus is very hard on the kidneys, and I fear damaging my internal organs.

I researched medical marijuana when the laws passed. I discovered that medical marijuana is one of the best treatments from neuropathy. I began using marijuana in food, and in oils. I also smoke marijuana in the privacy of my own home, when I am able to stay home. I use it mainly in the evening after the workday, when I use medical marijuana; I get some relief from the pain, and I cope with the pain better than in the past.

I have been narcotic free for almost two years. There are physical activities I am now able to do, which I was not able to do in the past. I now enjoy kayaking, canoeing, riding motorcycles, hiking, and camping. Thank you to the great State of Michigan for helping me live a healthy lifestyle; by permitting me to have a Medical Marijuana card.

Please preserve my rights to safe access to medical marijuana, supplied by someone I trust. Since the stores closed, I have had a difficult time acquiring medicine. I have been without marijuana for three weeks. I am suffering with numbness in my extremities, my joints are painful. I am allowed to grow medical marijuana, but crops fail due to bugs, mold, temperature and many other factors. It is sometimes difficult to have a successful grow. I am awaiting plants which will not be mature for weeks.

My employer fired me because I used medical marijuana. I was not under the influence of marijuana, nor any other drug while at work. The termination had nothing to do with performance, but was based on hearsay. I thought the laws protected me from discrimination. My employer, like many employers, did not have a policy addressing the medical marijuana issue. It is a travesty.

I lost a career of twenty five years, being fired was devastating! Fortunately, I am intelligent and industrious and I have chosen to begin my own company, and be my own boss. I definitely will have a policy addressing the use of medical marijuana.

I appreciate your time, I hope you will consider my story and other, who have benefitted, and/or suffered from the medical marijuana laws.

Sincerely,

Jenine L Kemp B.S.R.S., RT ( R) (M) (CT) (MR)

Since 1968, all forms of segregation have been found unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. In 2008, segregation reared its ugly head once again. In 2008, 63% of Michigan voters went to the polls and cast their votes in favor of a clearly written medical marijuana act. An act that was written in lay mans terms so that it was easily understood to all who read it. Well, almost everyone.

Since the inception of the Michigan medical marijuana law, Bill Schutte has led a tyrannous crusade against medical marijuana patients across the state. He encouraged Para-military style raids on the sick and dying citizens that were in complete compliance of the law as it was written. Urging prosecuting attorneys to ignore the law and holding closed door meeting to inform local law enforcement how to get around the law and eradicate medical marijuana from their towns. Wasting tax payer dollars and precious resources to imprison people the law was meant to protect.

Michigans medical marijuana patients have been labeled second class citizens. Our civil rights have been completely ignored, and the law that was put in place to protect us from prosecution, has never been implemented. Here we are, almost four years later, and the cards that are suppose to be in a patients hands within 21 days, are arriving anywhere from three to eight months later. And law enforcement is still throwing patients that are in full compliance of the law, in jail. They are citing "grey areas" in the law.

These Bills that are before you, offer no clarification to the law what so ever. That is because the law is already clear. It just needs to be implemented. These Bills only add restrictions to the law. Restrictions that make medical marijuana patients second class segregated citizens.

I am opposed to law enforcement having any kind of access to my confidential medical information. If the law were implemented properly, there would have been a phone number to the MDCH established for law enforcement to verify a patients status. I am opposed to being forced to keep my medical marijuana in a case, in my trunk or inaccessible from the interior of my car, while its perfectly fine to have a six pack of beer and a bottle of Vicodin sitting on the front seat. I oppose any changes to the current law as it was clearly written. Stop violating our civil and constitutional rights and immediately implement the law as it was written. All I want is what I voted for.

Wagle

Jason

Honey Creek Ct.

456

MI. 48169

Pinckney,

Hi my name is Jennifer Schueller, I am writing this for myself and no one has pressured me into writing this nor is any one holding a gun to my head for writing this. I am doing this at my own free will. I was in the US Army back in 1994-1997 during that time I had hurt my back and have had back problems ever since. I have been off and on narcotics since then and nothing has helped me.

I have had injections they only last so long and then I am back in pain. I am sick of being in pain and not being able to walk. I can't even be around my son and play with him. I am big at being a family person. It makes me depressed because I am not able to play with my son. Being on narcotics makes me so out of it that I can't function or I am asleep half the time I can't function.

I was bed ridden for a while because it hurt just to move. That was just about 6 months ago. I wanted to get out and do things. I knew I couldn't but would try and just put myself in more pain because I couldn't walk or because I was hurting. My pain pills I was having to double up on and couldn't get any relief.

I happen to hear about medical marijuana from a friend one time never thought of it again. I have never been into drugs or thought of doing drugs. I have never been in trouble with the law or with anything. So I finally had enough I figured what the hell! I am going to talk to my husband about this and see what he thinks.

So last year about September 2011 I decided to make the move and try medical marijuana just to see if it would work. What do you know! OMG! It worked!!!! I am pain free for a longer period of time. I am able to walk without pain. I am able to do things to a certain extent and I can spend time with my family. I don't have to worry about using my walker or my cane. I feel more happier and I feel I can do more but I know that I am limited to only doing so much.

I didn't ask to be hurt. I didn't ask to feel this way but I do and right now the pain free way is to smoke medical marihuana and I think I have every right to do that. If it was made on earth then why not smoke it. Shoot why not make money off it and tax it like Colorado does. Why not let them ship it like they do everything else. We as a state could make millions of dollars off this if you would think logically at this. Think of this as cigarettes but only be able to smoke it at the age of 21.

Thank you for listening to me.

Jennifer Schueller  
7204 E Grand River Ave  
Lot #48  
Portland, MI 48875  
517-743-4795



A TRUE TESTIMONY FROM:  
Joseph J. Kudla

I am a 60 year old former U.S. Marine who served in Viet Nam where I contracted type 2 diabetes through contact with Agent Orange. (Agent Orange is a Dow Chemical defoliate used in Viet Nam.) I also believe I contracted Hepatitis C through the unsterilized procedure used during multiple injections given to us prior to going overseas. The marijuana I use at night alleviates most of the stinging neuropathy pain that is associated with diabetes and allows me to sleep at night.

I recently went through a failed attempt to destroy the Hep C in my liver. There is going to be another attempt with higher doses of the medication used. These medications (interferon and ribavirin) not only attack the Hep C virus but also your immune system giving you flu like symptoms that make you nauseas and feverish. The marijuana I use helps tremendously with these symptoms and allows me an appetite to eat.

Joseph J. Kudla  
3780 Tice Trail  
Harrison, MI 48625  
(989) 545-7901

In order to give a testimonial to how medical marihuana helps me, I have to first provide some background about my medical condition. I'm also sharing this information because much attention has been paid in the media, to how many patients in the MMMP get their cards for "Chronic Pain", with the implication usually being that these patients don't have serious illnesses. Well I got my card for Chronic Pain, but that is just the tip of the iceberg, and I really hope you understand that people who are using Medical Marihuana for Chronic Pain, are in fact suffering from serious health issues. This also speaks to the fact that the Review Panel needs to be established, to add more conditions to the Registry.

I have a rare autoimmune disorder called Scleroderma, also known as "the skin hardening disease" (See attached #1). I have the diffuse, systemic kind of Scleroderma that attacks the internal organs as well as the skin. I wasn't diagnosed with Scleroderma until 2006, after years of medical problems that began when I was a teenager.

1980's – Depression : I couldn't get out of bed, cried all the time for no reason, began therapy, started anti-depressants, attempted suicide, was hospitalized for a month in a psychiatric unit so they could get me on medicine that worked. During a routine EEG it was discovered that I had "petit mal" seizures, also known as "absence" seizures. During this time I was treated with a variety of medications for depression: Lithium (and Inderal to control the shaking from the Lithium), Desyrel and Norpramine were tried at various times as well as Tegretol for the seizures. All had bothersome side effects, so after a year or so I quit taking them and lived with it as best I could.

1990's – Began having severe acid reflux, couldn't find a medicine to control it (tried Zantac, Prilosec, and Prevacid without success). By 1993 I started having trouble swallowing. My doctor at the time said it was psychological (related to depression). The trouble swallowing got worse: I timed it once; it took 45 minutes to eat half a sandwich, because it was so hard to get it down my throat, and I had to drink 16 oz. of water to be able to swallow it at all.

During the 1990's, I was also doing "normal" things like going to college and working. I obtained an Associate Degree in Arts and Sciences in 1990, and a Certificate in Nursing (Practical Nurse). I worked from the time I was 18, until I was 30.

By 1998 I'd lost around 50 lb., still had severe acid reflux, and was mainly eating soup because it was the only thing I could swallow. I saw a surgeon in 1998 and was diagnosed with Achalasia (Attach. 2). In December 1998, after an attempt at Esophageal Dilatation which only helped for a month, I had the surgery for achalasia: Heller Myotomy with Toupet Fundoplication. After surgery, I could swallow easier and regained the weight, but I still have severe acid reflux. I have pain several times during the day, and I wake up coughing and choking at night from inhaling stomach contents. There are a lot of things I can't eat because they make me sick – whole or 2% milk, most fruits or juices, especially citrus, soda pop, cucumbers, raw onion, or pepper for example. I don't leave the house without 3 pieces of bread (to eat, as needed, to soak up stomach acid & hopefully stop reflux), a huge glass of water, and Over the Counter anti-acids. I frequently get nauseous from the stomach pain, and/ or from medication.

In 1999, I hurt my back lifting something. I had an MRI that showed a bulging disk & was diagnosed with Degenerative Disk Disease. I went through Physical Therapy. During the '90's I also had a few Grand Mal seizures, where my lips turned blue, sometimes I'd fall down, sometimes I'd stiffen up, EEGs showed seizure disorder.

2000's – My husband was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. I had a resurgence of the depression, with anxiety this time; I was overwhelmed with caring for my husband, myself, and working full time. I stopped working and went on antidepressants again but they were ineffective, or caused too many side effects to continue. I started having trouble breathing, was diagnosed with Asthma & started inhalers. I found out I had a couple "nodules", one is on my thyroid, but they were benign & didn't affect the function of the thyroid.

By then, I was starting to wonder why I was having all these problems! One day I was on the internet looking at a website on Achalasia and it mentioned Scleroderma as a possible cause. Given my history & the fact that my Aunt had Scleroderma, I asked my doctor for a referral to a Rheumatologist.

In 2006 I saw the Rheumatologist. He looked at my fingers (which are shiny and tight), listened to my history & told me I have Scleroderma (confirmed by finger biopsy at my request), as well as Raynaud's phenomenon (attach. 1).

Of course, finding out I have Scleroderma didn't help my mental health much. Some time in there, I started counseling again, and started on an antidepressant (Paxil).

After a death of a person close to me in 2007, of course, the depression increased. The psychiatrist tried to increase my Paxil but I couldn't tolerate it; it made me throw up. So I remain on a low dose compared to what is generally prescribed (according to my psychiatrist). It helps, and I also use techniques I learned in counseling to fight off depression and anxiety, as well as prayer.

In the past few years, I've had a few more things pile on; my back got worse so there's a herniated disk now and more degeneration. I also have a torn tendon in my shoulder, and tendonitis in my elbow, along with aches and pains in my other joints, that probably signals that the skin hardening is occurring there too. Around the time of the death in the family, I started being hoarse. Months went by; it got worse, so I had it checked and biopsied by an Ear, Nose Throat doc. It is a "nodule" on my vocal cord. So, now I can't talk very well, and the more I talk, the more I lose my voice. When I saw a vocal therapist, she said that the type of acid reflux I have is "Laryngeal – Pharyngeal Reflux (LPR)", not "Gastro-esophageal reflux" like everyone else seems to have these days. So that's a fancy way of saying the acid from my stomach goes all the way up into my mouth, washing over the vocal cords (and sometimes into my lungs), on the way. I found out this year I'm severely deficient in Vitamin D so I have to take a large dose of that, and get tested to find out if I'm deficient in any other nutrients.

So that's my condition, physically. Next I'd like to discuss Medical Marijuana: how I use it, how it benefits me, and how the proposed bills will affect the ability of patients to obtain the medical marijuana they need.

## (2). Achalasia Attachment from UpToDate



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### Patient information: Achalasia

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### ACHALASIA OVERVIEW

Achalasia is a rare swallowing disorder that affects about 1 in every 100,000 people. The first symptom is usually increasing difficulty with swallowing. Most people are diagnosed between the ages of 25 and 60 years. Although the condition is life long and cannot be cured, it can usually be controlled with careful monitoring and treatment.

### ACHALASIA CAUSE

The specific cause of achalasia is unknown. However, patients with achalasia have two problems in the esophagus (the tube that carries food from the mouth to the stomach) ([figure 1](#)).

- The lower two-thirds of the esophagus does not propel food toward the stomach properly.
- The lower esophageal sphincter (LES), a circular band of muscle that lies at the junction of the esophagus and the stomach, does not function correctly. Normally, the LES helps prevent food from flowing backwards, from the stomach into the esophagus. The LES should relax in response to swallowing to allow food to enter the stomach.

In people with achalasia, the LES fails to relax, creating a barrier that prevents food and liquids from passing into the stomach ([figure 2](#)). One theory is that the nerve cells responsible for relaxation are destroyed by an unknown cause.

Damage to the LES and esophagus causes large volumes of food and saliva to accumulate in the esophagus. Most people can initially compensate for this. Eventually, the barrier progresses to the point where food and saliva cannot reliably enter the stomach. As a result, food and saliva build up in the esophagus.

### ACHALASIA SYMPTOMS

The most common symptom of achalasia is difficulty swallowing (liquids or solids). This problem begins slowly and progress gradually; many people do not seek help until symptoms are advanced. Some

people compensate by eating more slowly and using specific maneuvers, such as lifting the neck or throwing the shoulders back, to improve emptying of the esophagus.

Other symptoms can include chest pain, regurgitation of swallowed food and liquid, heartburn, difficulty burping, a sensation of fullness or a lump in the throat, hiccups, and weight loss.

## **ACHALASIA DIAGNOSIS**

Achalasia is usually suspected based upon symptoms, although tests are needed to confirm the diagnosis.

**Chest x-rays** — A simple chest x-ray may reveal abnormal changes in the esophagus and absence of air in the stomach, two abnormalities that suggest achalasia.

**Barium swallow test** — The barium swallow test is the primary screening test for achalasia. The test involves swallowing a chalky-tasting, thick mixture of barium while x-rays are taken. The barium shows the outline of the esophagus and LES ([figure 2](#)).

Barium swallows are usually performed under fluoroscopy, a continuous low-grade x-ray, which is helpful for studying the motion in the esophagus. In achalasia, barium swallows usually reveals an absence of contractions in the esophagus after swallowing. Sometimes this test shows esophagus contracting spastically in response to swallowing; this variation of achalasia is known as vigorous achalasia.

After the barium swallow, you should drink extra fluid. Stools may be light in color for a few days after testing as a result of the barium.

**Manometry** — Manometry refers to the measurement of pressure within the esophagus and the LES. Pressures are measured by advancing a thin tube through the mouth or nose into the esophagus. The test is done after having nothing to eat or drink for eight hours, while you are awake. You will be asked to swallow while the tube is in place.

Manometry is always used to confirm achalasia. The test typically reveals three abnormalities in people with achalasia: high pressure in the LES at rest, failure of the LES to relax after swallowing, and an absence of useful (peristaltic) contractions in the lower esophagus. The last two features are the most important and are required to make the diagnosis.

**Endoscopy** — Endoscopy allows the physician to see the inside of the esophagus, LES, and stomach using a thin, lighted, flexible tube. Endoscopy is done while you are sedated. This test is usually recommended for people with suspected achalasia and is especially useful for detecting other conditions that mimic achalasia. (See "[Patient information: Upper endoscopy](#)".)

In people with achalasia, endoscopy often reveals abnormal changes in the esophagus and food that has become stuck; it may also reveal inflammation, small ulcers caused by residual food or pills, and candida (yeast) infection.

The endoscope can be advanced through the LES and into the stomach to check for stomach cancer. Cancer in the upper part of the stomach can produce symptoms almost identical to those of achalasia, and is called pseudoachalasia (meaning "false" achalasia). Thus, biopsies (small samples of tissue) are often obtained in the lower portion of the esophagus. Having a biopsy while sedated is not painful and is safe.

## **ACHALASIA TREATMENT**

Several options are available for the treatment of achalasia. Unfortunately, none can stop or reverse the underlying problem. However, all of the treatments are effective for improving symptoms.

Two of these treatments (drug therapy and botulinum toxin injection) work by reducing the LES pressure while two other treatments, balloon dilatation and surgery (myotomy), work by mechanically weakening the muscle fibers of the LES.

**Drug therapy** — Two classes of drugs, nitrates and calcium channel blockers, have muscle-relaxing effects. These drugs can relax the LES and decrease symptoms in people with achalasia. They are usually taken by placing a pill under the tongue 10 to 30 minutes before meals.

Drug therapy is the least invasive option for treating achalasia. However, most people find that long-term drug therapy is inconvenient, ineffective, and sometimes associated with side effects, such as headache and low blood pressure. Furthermore, these drugs tend to become less effective over time. For these reasons, medications are recommended for patients who are not interested in or not healthy enough for other treatments.

**Balloon dilatation (pneumatic dilatation)** — Balloon dilatation stretches the contracted LES. This procedure is effective for relieving symptoms of achalasia in two-thirds of people, although chest pain persists in some people. Up to half of patients may require more than one treatment for adequate relief. The person is given general anesthesia and is generally able to go home at the end of the day.

**Procedure** — If you have balloon dilatation, you will be asked to drink only liquids for 12 hours to two days in advance (a longer period is recommended if you have a great deal of food in the esophagus). Using fluoroscopy, a physician advances a guide wire down the esophagus and positions it inside the LES. A deflated balloon is then advanced along this guide wire, positioned inside the LES, and inflated for about 60 seconds. The balloon is then deflated and withdrawn, and you are monitored in a recovery area for five to six hours to detect any complications. If there are no complications, you can usually resume eating after six hours. If your day-to-day symptoms do not improve, additional dilatations can be performed.

**Success rate** — A single balloon dilatation session continues to relieve symptoms of achalasia in about 60 percent of people one year after the procedure and in about 25 percent of people five years after the procedure. Higher success rates have been reported in some studies. The success rate after longer periods has not been well studied, but some people have remained symptom-free for as long as 25 years.

**Complications** — About 15 percent of people experience severe chest pain immediately after balloon dilatation and some experience fever.

The most significant complication of balloon dilatation is creation of a hole (perforation) in the wall of the esophagus; this complication occurs in about 2 to 6 percent of people undergoing the procedure, and it is most likely to occur during the first dilatation session. Symptoms of persistent or worsening pain in the hours after the procedure may indicate a perforation. Some doctors routinely check x-ray and/or swallow tests immediately after the procedure to check for a perforation.

Most perforations are small, and some heal on their own with antibiotics and intravenous feeding. However, many doctors recommend surgery to repair these tears, regardless of their size. There is no way to predict perforation; however, it is sensible to choose a doctor who experiences performing balloon dilatation procedures.

Other possible complications of balloon dilatation include bruising of the esophageal wall, damage to the esophageal lining, the development of small pockets (diverticula) in the esophagus or upper stomach, and the development of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). Because the LES is the principal barrier that prevents the reflux of stomach contents into the esophagus, its disruption can lead to acid reflux. GERD occurs in about 2 percent of people after balloon dilatation, but is usually easily controlled with acid-reducing medications. (See "[Patient information: Acid reflux \(gastroesophageal reflux disease\) in adults](#)".)

**Surgery (myotomy)** — Myotomy is a surgical procedure that can be used to directly cut the muscle fibers of the LES. The most common surgical technique is called the Heller myotomy. In the past, surgery was performed through an open incision in the chest or abdomen; surgery can now be performed through a tiny incision using a thin, lighted tube (a laparoscope or thoracoscope). This new approach is less traumatic and shortens recovery time. People who undergo laparoscopic myotomy are given general anesthesia, and generally stay in the hospital for one to two nights. Some post-operative pain is expected, which can be controlled with pain medications.

**Success rate** — Surgery relieves symptoms in 70 to 90 percent of people. Symptom relief is sustained in about 85 percent of people 10 years after surgery and in about 65 percent of people 20 years after the surgery. Thus, surgery is a more permanent solution for achalasia than balloon dilatation or botulinum toxin injection (see below). However, surgery can also be associated with complications, and is more invasive and more expensive than balloon dilatation.

**Complications** — Like balloon dilatation, there is a risk of acid reflux following myotomy, which can cause damage to the esophagus over time. Surgeons generally perform a fundoplication (wrapping a portion of the stomach around the esophagus to prevent regurgitation of stomach contents) at the time of surgery ([figure 3](#)); however this does not always prevent reflux. Patients should be regularly monitored for this complication, and may require acid suppressing medications. (See "[Patient information: Acid reflux \(gastroesophageal reflux disease\) in adults](#)".)

**Botulinum toxin injection** — Botulinum toxin injections temporarily paralyze the nerves that signal the LES to contract, thereby helping to relieve the obstruction. Botulinum toxin injection may also be used as a diagnostic test in people with suspected achalasia who have inconclusive test results.

**Procedure** — The injection procedure is performed during routine endoscopy, while the person is sedated. The botulinum toxin is injected directly into the LES.

**Success rate** — A single botulinum toxin injection session relieves symptoms in 65 to 90 percent of people in the short term (three months to approximately one year). Additional injections can relieve symptoms in patients whose symptoms return. Botulinum toxin injection is more likely to be effective in people over the age of 50 years and in people who have the vigorous form of achalasia.

When compared with balloon dilatation, botulinum toxin has a similar effectiveness for relieving symptoms in the first one to two years after the procedure; however, prolonged effectiveness requires multiple botulinum toxin injections in 40 to 50 percent of people because the paralyzing effect of the toxin is temporary. The long-term safety and effectiveness of botulinum toxin injection is unknown.

**Complications** — About 25 percent of people have chest pain for a few hours after the procedure and about 5 percent develop heartburn. Damage to the esophageal wall and lining are rare. The short-term safety of botulinum toxin injection appears to be greater than the short-term safety of both balloon dilatation and surgery; this greater short-term safety may make botulinum toxin injection a better choice for people with other medical conditions who must avoid more invasive procedures. Because the amount of botulinum toxin used is very small, there is virtually no risk of botulism poisoning from this procedure.

## **LONG-TERM RISK OF ESOPHAGEAL CANCER**

People with achalasia have an increased risk of esophageal cancer, particularly if obstruction is not adequately relieved. As a result, doctors recommend regular endoscopic screening for early detection of this cancer. (See "[Patient information: Upper endoscopy](#)".)

## **ACHALASIA\*FOLLOW UP**

Since none of the treatments for achalasia cure the underlying disease, regular follow-up is needed. The goal is to recognize and treat recurrent symptoms or complications of treatment (reflux) early. Recognizing and treating these problems can help to prevent the development of severe enlargement of the esophagus (mega-esophagus) as well as esophageal strictures and cancer, which could require surgical removal of the entire esophagus.

## **WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION**

Your healthcare provider is the best source of information for questions and concerns related to your medical problem.

This article will be updated as needed every four months on our web site ([www.uptodate.com/patients](http://www.uptodate.com/patients)).



Related topics for patients, as well as selected articles written for healthcare professionals, are also available. Some of the most relevant are listed below.

#### **Patient Level Information:**

[Patient information: Upper endoscopy](#)

[Patient information: Acid reflux \(gastroesophageal reflux disease\) in adults](#)

#### **Professional Level Information:**

[Clinical manifestations and diagnosis of achalasia](#)

[Evaluation of dysphagia in adults](#)

[Overview of the treatment of achalasia](#)

[Pathophysiology and etiology of achalasia](#)

[Pneumatic dilation and botulinum toxin injection for achalasia](#)

The following organizations also provide reliable health information.

- National Library of Medicine

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000267.htm](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000267.htm), available in Spanish)

- The Society of Surgery of the Alimentary Tract

[www.ssat.com/cgi-bin/achalasia.cgi](http://www.ssat.com/cgi-bin/achalasia.cgi))

- The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

[www.sts.org](http://www.sts.org))

[1-7]

**Last literature review version 19.3:** January 2012

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**(More)**

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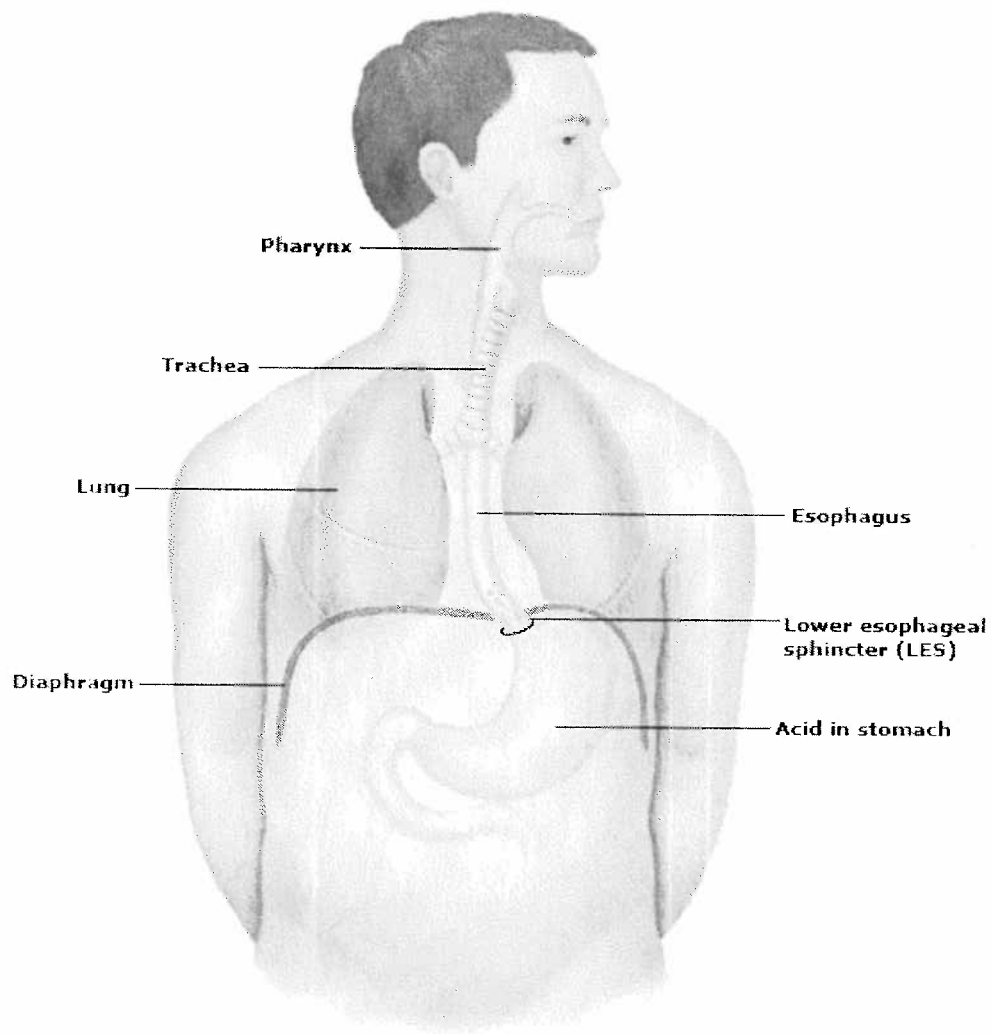
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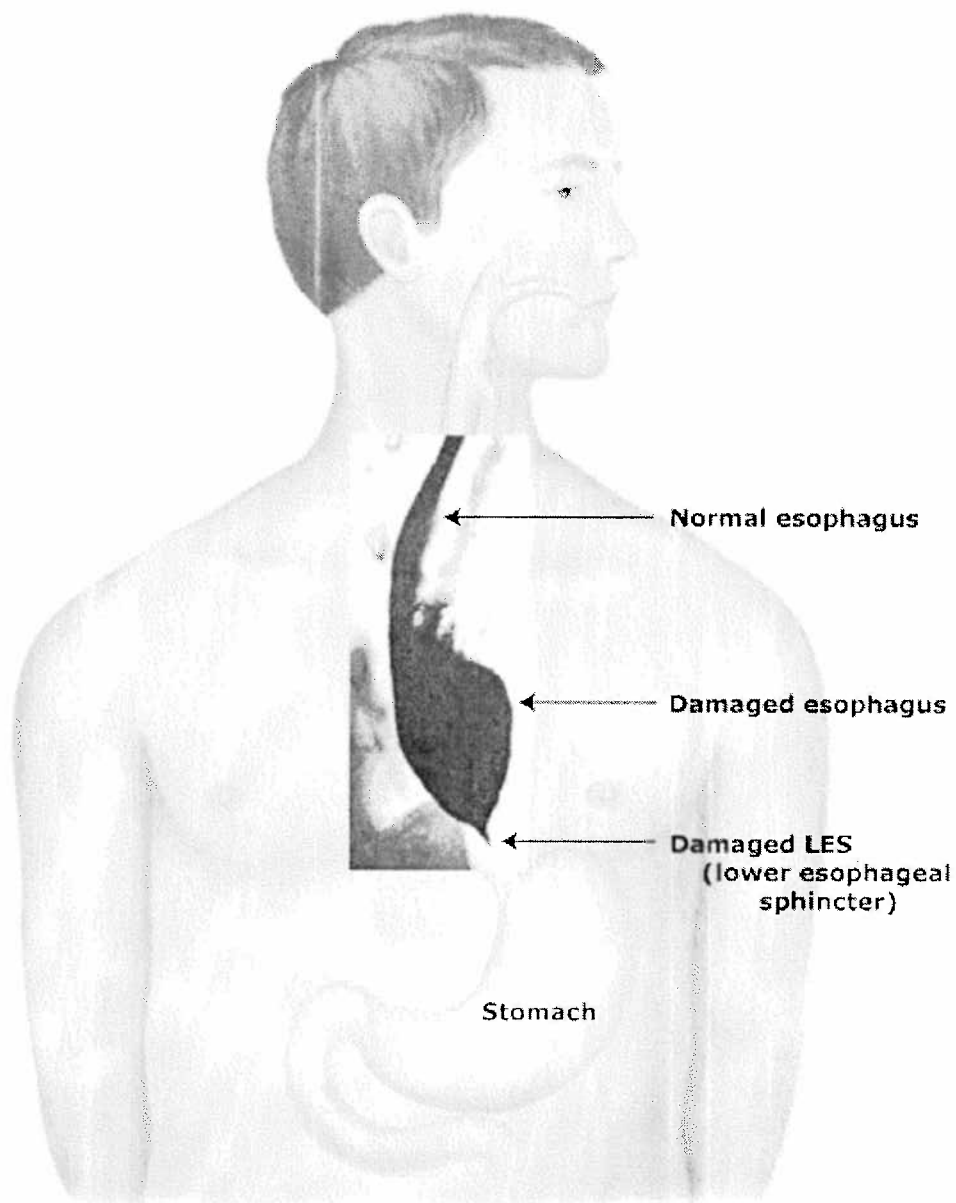
## **GRAPHICS**

Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)



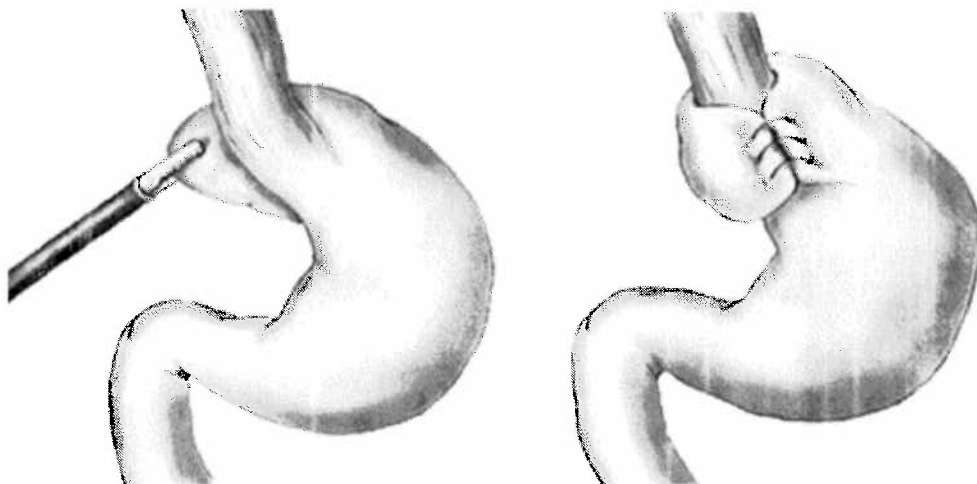
When we eat, food is carried from the mouth through the esophagus, a tube-like structure that is approximately 10 inches long and 1 inch wide in adults. At the lower end of the esophagus, where it joins the stomach, there is a circular ring of muscle that relaxes and opens when food reaches that point, called the lower esophageal sphincter (LES). This allows food to enter the stomach and then closes to prevent the back-up of food and acid into the esophagus. Reflux can occur if the LES is weak or stays relaxed too long.

**Barium swallow showing achalasia**



This figure shows an actual x-ray of someone with achalasia. You can see that the lower esophagus is enlarged compared to the upper part, and that the lower esophageal sphincter is very narrow. The damaged lower esophageal sphincter makes it hard for food and fluid to pass into the stomach.

**Nissen fundoplication**



*Original artwork by JP Gray, 2007.*

(1). Scleroderma – from PubMed Health. A service of the National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health.

A.D.A.M. Medical Encyclopedia. Atlanta (GA): A.D.A.M.; 2011.

## **Scleroderma**

**CREST syndrome; Limited scleroderma; Progressive systemic sclerosis; Systemic sclerosis; Localized scleroderma; Mixed connective disease; Morphea - linear**

Last reviewed: February 14, 2011.

Scleroderma is a connective tissue disease that involves changes in the skin, blood vessels, muscles, and internal organs. It is a type of autoimmune disorder, a condition that occurs when the immune system mistakenly attacks and destroys healthy body tissue.

### **Causes, incidence, and risk factors**

The cause of scleroderma is unknown. People with this condition have a buildup of a substance called collagen in the skin and other organs. This buildup leads to the symptoms of the disease.

The disease usually affects people 30 to 50 years old. Women get scleroderma more often than men do. Some people with scleroderma have a history of being around silica dust and polyvinyl chloride, but most do not.

Widespread scleroderma can occur with other autoimmune diseases, including systemic lupus erythematosus and polymyositis. In such cases, the disorder is referred to as mixed connective disease.

### **Symptoms**

Some types of scleroderma affect only the skin, while others affect the whole body.

- Localized scleroderma usually affects only the skin on the hands and face. It develops slowly, and rarely, if ever, spreads throughout the body or causes serious complications.
- Systemic scleroderma, or sclerosis, may affect large areas of skin and organs such as the heart, lungs, or kidneys. There are two main types of systemic scleroderma: Limited disease (CREST syndrome) and diffuse disease.

Skin symptoms of scleroderma may include:

- Fingers or toes that turn blue or white in response to hot and cold temperatures (See: Raynaud's phenomenon)
- Hair loss
- Skin hardness

- Skin that is abnormally dark or light
- Skin thickening, stiffness, and tightness of fingers, hands, and forearm
- Small white lumps beneath the skin, sometimes oozing a white substance that looks like toothpaste
- Sores (ulcers) on the fingertips or toes
- Tight and mask-like skin on the face

Bone and muscle symptoms may include:

- Joint pain
- Numbness and pain in the feet
- Pain, stiffness, and swelling of fingers and joints
- Wrist pain

Breathing problems may result from scarring in the lungs and can include:

- Dry cough
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing

Digestive tract problems may include:

- Bloating after meals
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Difficulty swallowing
- Esophageal reflux or heartburn
- Problems controlling stools (fecal incontinence)

## **Signs and tests**

The health care provider will perform a physical exam. The exam may show hard, tight, thick skin.

Your blood pressure will be checked. Scleroderma can cause severe inflammation of small blood vessels, such as those in the kidneys. Problems with your kidneys can lead to high blood pressure.

Blood tests may include:

- Antinuclear antibody (ANA) panel
- Antibody testing
- ESR (sed rate)
- Rheumatoid factor

Other tests may include:

- Chest x-ray
- CT scan of the lungs
- Echocardiogram
- Urinalysis
- Tests to see how well your lungs and gastrointestinal (GI) tract are working
- Skin biopsy

## **Treatment**

There is no specific treatment for scleroderma.

Your doctor will prescribe medicines and other treatments to control your symptoms and prevent complications.

Medicines used to treat scleroderma include:

- Power anti-inflammatory medicines called corticosteroids
- Immune-suppressing medications such as methotrexate and Cytoxan
- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)

Other treatments for specific symptoms may include:

- Medicines for heartburn or swallowing problems
- Blood pressure medications (particularly ACE inhibitors) for high blood pressure or kidney problems
- Light therapy to relieve skin thickening
- Medicines to improve breathing



- Medications to treat Raynaud's phenomenon

Treatment usually also involves physical therapy.

### **Support Groups**

See: [Scleroderma - resources](#)

### **Expectations (prognosis)**

Some people with scleroderma have symptoms that develop quickly over the first few years and continue to get worse. However, in most patients, the disease slowly gets worse.

People who only have skin symptoms have a better outlook. Widespread (systemic) scleroderma can damage the heart, kidney, lungs, or GI tract, which may cause death.

Lung problems are the most common cause of death in patients with scleroderma.

### **Complications**

The most common cause of death in people with scleroderma is scarring of the lungs, called [pulmonary fibrosis](#).

Other complications of scleroderma include:

- Cancer
- [Heart failure](#)
- High blood pressure in the lungs (pulmonary hypertension)
- [Kidney failure](#)
- Problems absorbing nutrients from food ([malabsorption](#))

### **Calling your health care provider**

Call for an appointment with your health care provider if:

- You have symptoms of scleroderma
- You have scleroderma and symptoms become worse or new symptoms develop

### **Prevention**

There is no known prevention. Reducing your exposure to silica dust and polyvinyl chloride may lower your risk for this disease.

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Review Date: 2/14/2011.

Reviewed by: Michael E. Makover, MD, professor, attending in rheumatology, New York University Medical Center, New York, NY. Review provided by VeriMed Healthcare Network. Also reviewed by David Zieve, MD, MHA, Medical Director, A.D.A.M., Inc.

show details Feb 20

This is the EXACT same email that I sent to all the representatives on the list a few weeks ago when you guys wanted me to contact them and ask to leave the law and the wish of the VOTERS alone . Instead of choosing one of the "format" letters I sent this one. This email is 100% honest and to me it is personal PROOF that marijuana has medicinal benefits.

I am a 56 years old married, father of three, not some 22 year old trying to beat the system and "get high" legally. In March of 2008 I was in a near fatal car accident,hospitalized for almost a month,in a wheelchair for 5 months then spent the next 2 1/2 years trying to get some relief from the CONSTANT,severe pain from both legs which were permanently injured in the crash. I tried EVERY major prescription pain pill on the market and NONE of them worked unless nausea,passing out, breathing problems and the very "pleasant" withdrawal symptoms count ! Then out of desperation I decided to join the Michigan Medical Marijuana Program and was very surprised that at least for a couple hours after using medical marijuana I was able to get some pain relief. There is NOBODY on this planet that will EVER change my mind, which is based on my own personal experience...that medical marijuana WORKS. If this is ever taken away from me then I will be forced to live each day with severe pain and no relief because I will NOT do an illegal drug.Please don't let this happen.

p.s. I find it extremely interesting that the federal government claims marijuana has no medical benefit yet they themselves have been growing and supplying this "useless" drug to a few people for decades for MEDICAL purposes.

KDehanke

## Legalize Cannabis in the United States

"I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food." (God; The Bible Genesis 1:29). Because cannabis is classified as an opiate it is looked down on, but this is not the truth at all, cannabis can be used for many things, not only for ourselves but for our environment. It is time that hemp, which can be used for paper products or carpets, from textiles to food oil, from construction material to paints, multiple types of medicine and medical purposes, and help our environment recover from the damage already done, once again be made legal in the United States.

### I. History of Cannabis in the United States

1. Cannabis use has existed for over ten thousand years; it is one of the oldest crops known for cultivation.

2. In 1492, Spain brought Cannabis Sativa to America via Christopher Columbus on his journey to the new world.

3. Cannabis then returned to America where it was introduced to Jamestown by the Puritans from England in the 1600's

a. Cannabis "hemp" became a major commercial crop.

b. European motherland wanted hemp, and cultivation was deemed mandatory.

- The puritans at Jamestown grew hemp as a part of their contract with the Virginia Company.

c. In 1639 the General Courts of Connecticut and Massachusetts ordered all families to plant at least one teaspoon of marijuana seed to farm.

- "so that in time, we might have a supply of linen cloth among ourselves"

4. In preparation for the Revolutionary War, severe mandatory cultivation laws were passed, and colonists increased their production of hemp for cloths and paper.

- American Colonists were convinced to arm up and fight for the freedom of their country by reading pamphlets published on hemp paper.

a. American colonists fought and won the Revolutionary war wearing hemp clothing, eating hemp seeds, using hemp oil to fuel fire, and writing notes for loved ones on hemp paper.

b. Both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were promoters of cannabis.

- George Washington grew hemp in his garden as a primary crop, the type of hemp he grew was known as "Indian hemp" which was grown more for its flowers "buds" (which are used for smoking) rather than for fiber.

- Thomas Jefferson grew hemp as a secondary crop, for fiber. He wrote all the rough drafts for the declaration of independents on hemp paper.

5. After the Revolutionary war Cannabis continued to be cultivated and used in the United States of America. In the 1800's hemp was used to make items such as rope, sails and cloths. Cannabis also became a common ingredient in medicine and was openly sold at pharmacies.

6. Cannabis was only occasionally used in recreational purposes. But in 1910 after the Mexican Revolution a wave of Mexican immigrants came to the United States and introduced the American public to the recreational use of cannabis.

7. The first regulation of Marijuana in the United States appeared in Washington D.C. in 1906, in the up and coming years more laws and regulations were passed against marijuana these included:

a. The Harrison Narcotic Act of 1914

- Prohibited possession of narcotics.

b. Federal Bureau of Narcotics was established in 1930

- Credited for criminalizing drugs such as cannabis.

c. Marihuana Tax Act of 1937

- Made possession or transfer of cannabis illegal throughout the United States, excluding medical or industrial uses which were heavily taxed.

d. Controlled Substances Act of 1970

- Law enacted that regulates the prescribing and dispensing psychoactive drugs.

e. Compassionate Use Act of 1996

- Act in California that legalized the use of medical marijuana.

- States legalized for the use of medical marijuana include...

1. California
2. Alaska
3. Oregon
4. Washington
5. Maine

6. Colorado
7. Nevada
8. Montana
9. Vermont
10. Rhode Island
11. New Mexico
12. Michigan
13. Arizona
14. DC
15. New Jersey
16. Delaware

## II. Medical Marijuana.

- a. THC and other cannabinoids, as a physician-recommended form of medicine or herbal therapy. Cannabis has a long history of medicinal use, with evidence dating back to 2,000 B.C.E.
- b. Marijuana is more effective, less toxic, and less expensive than alternative synthetic medicines currently used.
- c. Marijuana can help people who suffer from arthritis, AIDS, rheumatism, leukemia, multiple sclerosis, cancer, and glaucoma, just to name a few.
- d. Recreational use for cannabis is illegal in most parts of the world. But its use as a medicine is legal in a number of territories worldwide, including Canada, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Israel, Italy, Finland, Portugal, and now parts of the United States.

## II. Environmental pros of legalizing marijuana.

- "Why use up the forests which were centuries in the making and the mines which required ages to lay down, if we can get the equivalent of forest and mineral products in the annual growth of the hemp fields?" Henry Ford.
- Since the hemp plant has been illegal in the United States for fifty-four years, we have turned to other resources, many of these are non-renewable, and using them has been very damaging to the environment.

- a. Hemp as fiber

- Hemp fiber is at least 10 times stronger than cotton.

- Hemp has been used to manufacture; canvas, linen, rope and thread.

- Cotton is grown with lots of fertilizers and pesticides, and growing it exhausts the soil. About half the pesticides used in the world are used on cotton. The cultivation of marijuana does not exhaust the soil, even after planting for many years, marijuana would largely decrease the use of pesticides as well.

#### b. Hemp as paper

- About half the forests in the world have been cut down in the past half-century to make papers.

- According to the USDA, 10,000 acres of planted hemp will produce as much paper as 40,000 acres of planted trees

- Trees must grow for thirty or fifty years after planting before they can be cut down and used for commercial use. Four months after the hemp plant is planted it is ten to twenty feet tall and can be harvested.

- Fewer corrosive and toxic chemicals are required to make paper from hemp than to make paper from trees. Therefore fewer chemicals will be released into our atmosphere.

#### c. Hemp seeds

- Used to make paints, varnishes and oils.

- The seed is also the second richest plant source of protein, and it is much cheaper to cultivate than soybeans, the richest source. Hempseed protein may also be processed and flavored any way that soybean protein can and could feed most of earth's animals.

#### d. Hemp as fuel

- Eventually the world supply of fossil fuel is going to run out, and since it takes millions of years to produce, the world should find an alternative, and quick.

- Hemp is the world's greatest known photosynthesizer. It converts the sun's energy into biomass more efficiently than any other plant (four times stronger). It can be used as the world new source of energy.

- Burning hemp for energy rather than coal will decrease the pollutants being put into our atmosphere.

- Hemp oil can also be an alternative to diesel fuel, which will be much cheaper to cultivate and much better for our environment. Henry Ford himself created his first vehicle to run off of a hemp fuel.

Conclusion:

If hemp were legal, it could become an economically viable and low polluting source of fuel, paints and varnishes, textiles and fabrics, paper and even food. Hemp might replace trees as raw material for pressboard or particleboard construction material. "Even if one takes every reefer madness allegation of the prohibitionists at face value, marijuana prohibition has done far more harm to far more people than marijuana ever could." William F. Buckley Jr. Legalize Cannabis in the United States.

Needless to say she got an A. Ha. It is 2:20 am right now as I sit here writing this so please again, bear with. As I said I am a 21 year old from Eastpointe. I was born in Mt.Clements at Mt.Clements General August 31st, to a mother Andrea Rach, and father Carl Rach. My parents where around my age when the had me and my sister Kayla who is going to be 20 this year. My parents divorced when I was 9 and it was really rough on me, and to be quite honest it wasn't until this past surgery until I let some of that repressed anger go. When my parents split it was really hard on my dad, he started drinking heavily, and partying doing his own thing, didn't really have time for his two kids as he was still in his late twenties and liked that life-style still. So basically it was just my mother, sister and I, oh, and can't forget God. My mother bless her heart started to attend church with her friend Micke at Chritian Trinty on Kelly road just north of Toepher. We grew up in that church, I honestly can not think of a group of people more loving. Even though my father never paid child support and even with mom not having a college degree we still managed to make it to where we are today. We bounced around from house to house growing up and seen our dad about a dozen times or so a year, usually around holidays which were spent at our loving Nanas house. I forgot to include Nana, she and Papa are also a big reason why we are where we are today. That is my father's mom and step-dad, (his real father was put into a nursing home for elztimers disease when I was younger) They honestly hold my mom dear-er in their hearts than my dad, simply because he has just so much potential but can't get past the bottle.. That being said, after having a kid come to one of our houses we had lived in to beat me up for talking to his girlfriend in the 7th grade, my mother decided that east warren probably wasn't the best place to raise two children. So she put herself in massive debt and moved us out to Harrison Township where we would finish out high school and reside up until about three years ago and we moved back to Eastpointe after mom filing for bankruptcy because she had just accumulated so much debt. So back to Harrison Township I was about 17 when I got my first real job, other than working with my old man when he needed help which was rare. It was at the River Rat on South River just before Jefferson. I worked there for a few years, and started out at the dish tank but soon moved up to the cooking line. Needless to say I got caught up in the restaurant life, the late hours, partying, and just that life as it was a dinner restaurant. Once I was moved to full time I started to have issues with my feet. (Oh, forgot to add, I have flat feet, was born with them and they're like ducks feet, literally if I hop on my right foot it'll suction cup to the floor. So bad that when I used to play football, I had to stop after trying out for my junior year of football because after tryouts I couldn't walk for a week on my feet because I had just put that much wear on them) So I went to go see a Podiatrist, Dr. Micheal Schey over on 12 and Ryan whom I had



seen since junior year. I had gone through a few pair of orthotics over the years and nothing seems to help. So when I came back complaining about my feet, he referred me to his surgeon, Dr. Hussein who was still at this office but only came in on Tuesdays. After seeing Hussein he started me on a series of Cortisone shots that I had later found out aren't good for a 17 year old kid. when I had turned 18 and still had the pain he sat my mother and I down and said that we should put me through a surgery to try to correct the worse of the two feet, the left, and that I should do it before I was 19 and my insurance ran out, so we did without thinking of getting a second opinion. So November 24th of 08 I got my first surgery. It was a rather extensive surgery, but without going into a lot of detail I got about 4 screws I believe the first time, and he shaved my bunion, and tried to use a piece of my muscle in my leg to build an arch. Well once I started to walk again he told me that it wasn't enough that he had underestimated the severity of my feet. So trusting him, I went under another surgery on April 17th of 09. He had added a bone graft from a cadaver and a 6 inch screw that would hold my heel and ankle together. I started walking again in June or so but had a pain right where the graft was at. I didn't think much of as my doctor gave me Vicodin 750 mg for both surgeries that I hadn't been taking and I had been trading them for my drug of choice - Marijuana. It wasn't until later on in 09 did I realize that I qualified for the medical marijuana license, and as soon as I found out I could I did. Marijuana has honestly in my opinion cured the muscle spasms that I had been experiencing and when I had been working all day and my foot hurt it was the one thing I could just do, and not have to feel really high with and get stomach cramps. I had taken the vicodin at the start of the surgeries because the pain from the first surgery, with all the nerve and muscle movement and reconstruction. It honestly didn't help at all, I couldn't even tell you how I felt during the first three weeks of the first surgery because I was just so high, all I could remember is I was missing Thanksgiving at Nanas house, and I had never missed one before, but I was in the hospital on a morphine drip. So anyway, on a trip up to Western with my girlfriend Stefanie Ritts, to visit some of her old friends, I had lost feeling in both of my feet. When we arrived in Kalamazoo and I had got out of the car I just remember panicking as both feet felt numb. Even just thinking about it now, I feel the anxieties, Ugh. We had gone there with the intent to party because Stef and I haven't got out much because I've been such a damn grump since 08 because I have always had the pain in my feet. But I couldn't party, I started to have massive anxieties as I was completely numb for 2 days, I started to panic, I called my mom and thought I should emit myself to the emergency room or something because I had never felt anything like this before in my life. Well I stuck it out and went to go see Dr Kahn over at LUPO on Gratiot just before Utica. My nana had referred me to him saying he will fix me. We went and got some x-rays and came to find out that I had started phase 1 spinal sublexion, and that in fact my left hip had been raised an inch because I had been favoring that over the right for so long. After about a week of seeing him 3x the numbness faded and I could feel my feet again as it was just a nerve being pinched. Once this happened I made an appointment with my foot doctor to make a annual checkup to see what was up. When I went in he told me basically that my ankle was collapsing and I needed to get it fixed asap. Now, my eyes opened up and I got a second opinion. I sought up Christopher

Zingas whom I heard was a man with magic hands. He told me that my feet were too beyond his expertise and referred me to a Professor Arthur Manoli. That was in January, I had met him and I tell ya what, this man has Godly hands. He told me that I had one of two options, basically my foot was pretty messed up and I could get this screw taken out (oh yeah, the main problem was the 6 inch screw that held my heel and ankle together had been pushing itself out, but it was normal, and he, Dr. Hussein, said he could take it out at his office. Now im not a dr, but I find that hard to believe) or I could get all the hardware removed, and he would than perform his own reconstructive surgery on me. I decided to get the reconstructive surgery done because it seemed pointless not to correct the problem as I am still young and don't want to suffer with the pain any longer. So Manoli and his team performed there surgery January 18th. Now here I am 20 days later, sitting in this bed still, semi - pain free but the process is still not over. He had given me a few prescriptions this surgery that were better than the last time they said, but after taking them I found myself having to take more and more just to be pain free. I ended up going through 60 vicodin 325 mg in the first 5 days. At this point I was like I'm killing myself, my liver cannot handle this as my stomach was cramping too. So I just started to smoke weed again. (forgot to say, the week before going under they told me I should probably stop smoking as the cannaboids would mess up my brain from going under blah blah blah, so I did. and I'll tell ya what, that week was hell, I felt so many anxietys and had stopped working to prep my room for the surgery, and it was hard. Finally I had to call my dr and ask for something to calm my nerves, they gave me some valume, which slightly took the edge off, but nothing like my marijuana can do for me) So here I am again, 20 days later, No prescription drugs, only marijuana reporting that I am pain free and have just been examining life as we know it. Sunday was the superbowl and i'm not into much sports but I do like the commercials that are on. I found one in particular that was very inspiring. It was a chrysler commerical and it starred Clint Eastwood, a remarkable man if you ask me. And it got me thinking, it is half-time, and I believe that Detroit, can, and will bring America back. So many people like Bill Schwette and his views like "Most responsible statewide leaders will oppose the legalization of drugs," Schuette said. "It doesn't keep citizens safe and it doesn't provide paychecks. We are trying to rebuild Michigan and rebuild the economy. This petition doesn't mean more jobs and it doesn't keep our communities safe." quoted from your article. It is men like Mr. Schuette who don't see the the potential in the people. I believe he is very blind. I may be young but I have been through alot, and I have seen many things that disquste me (like my 7 year old sister who is prescribed xanax, forgot to mention her, she is my fathers daughter whom he had with another woman that he won't marry but just sticks around because she freeloads off my father. needless to say she too is a xanax freak and pops a good 9 pills a day) Not only that, but Teen mom, UGH don't get me started. But I could rant about that all day, but what sickens me the most is this, God gave us every seed bearing herb, why on earth, when we founded our country on the hemp plant, a plant brought by Christopher Columbus, that is 4x greener, yields more paper than timber, with less chemicals, THAT CAN WE CAN USE FOR ANOTHER RENEWABLE RESOURCE LIKE CARS, WHAT DETROIT IS KNOWN FOR, is Illegal. Isn't it time that the government stops making there dollar and its time for us, the

middle-lower class to earn a dollar or two. Think of all the jobs we would create with farmers having farms of hemp, to help be turned into fuel for our vehicles, at a much cheaper rate than 3.50 cents a gallon. How could Henry Ford, and Diesel, make there engines start out like that, but instead be turned into gas machines that just pollute the earth. I don't know about you, but I would like to live the next 50 years, and I don't see that happening cutting down all of our forests and burning up our ozone. Marijuana not only is a cure for Cancer, according to Rick Simpson, but the hemp plant could help bring back our world, shit even WORLD PEACE would be possible if we were all able to come off our high horses, we would have no reason to have our Navy Fleets all over the ocean potrolling because we could all just get along, we wouldn't need Pride, Power, and Greed. We could all just get along. Maybe it's just late and i'm just rambling, but I think that the Marijuana Plant, and Hemp Plant would bring back America, we could establish a tax, and the government would make a killing, we would bring ourselves out of debt, it just makes so much sense, but yet, we're running from it. I just don't know why. I hope you read this with an open mind and I look forward from hearing back from you. Please, feel free to email me back at [kylerach1990@gmail.com](mailto:kylerach1990@gmail.com) or call/text me at 586 329 9951. Thank you for your time! God Bless!

## My Story for Legislation

My name is Lee Arreola, and I live in Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan. I am 38 years old, and have been fully disabled for almost 5 years due to many different diseases. My diseases are Multiple Sclerosis, Seizures, Severe Insomnia, Degenerative Disc Disease, Lumbar Stenosis, Edema, Fibromyalgia, Anxiety, Depression, Endometriosis, Obstructive Sleep Apnea, Restless Leg Syndrome, GERD, and due to Cancer (Epithelial Angiomyolipoma), I have only one kidney. I also suffer daily from severe muscle cramping over my entire body, hand and leg tremors, nausea, pain, and some comprehension issues. I self medicate with medicinal marijuana and other natural herbs like ginger, chamomile, and parsley. I also take pharmacological drugs like Nerontin, Dilaudid, Lunesta, Zantac, and Prilosec. I have to watch my diet very carefully, and I add Vitamin Supplements to my daily diet.

I am writing this testimonial today because I am scared that my rights are going to be violated. I am concerned that taking medical marijuana will make me a criminal. I use more medical marijuana than any of the other herbs, vitamins or pharmacological drugs combined to treat every symptom for every disease that I have. It is effective in every way.

Just recently I had my left kidney removed at the University Of Michigan Medical Center in Ann Arbor. My doctors stated that my body was better prepared for the surgery; I did not bleed as much during surgery as I had in a prior surgery plus I recovered much quicker than the previous time. When I found out I was having the surgery I vowed that I would exercise every morning for twenty minutes for the month and a half prior to the surgery date. I made this happen by using medicinal marijuana before every exercise session. My doctors came to understand that medicinal marijuana was the only thing that helped with my severe nausea so that I was able to eat so they did not require me to eat anything while in the hospital.

Another problem that I have is that my liver is very sensitive, this means that any kind of chemical that I ingest (breath, eat, or drink) causes my liver enzymes to elevate. Most pharmacological drugs cause my liver to go into distress making them an unrealistic choice as a health care option.

If laws were passed to take away or hinder my right to use medicinal marijuana legally, I am not sure what I would do. Please do not make me a criminal because I am sick.

I am a 57 year old Male who will be moving back to Michigan, the state I was born and raised in.

Two years ago the Dr's thought I had Pancreatic Cancer and asked for a biopsy, but told me as serious as it was that they would recommend that I schedule surgery. I did and after being told that they would do a Distal pancreatectomy which is the removal of the tail section of the pancreas. Of course they asked just before I went under if they had to do anything else that they felt need be done could they do it. Of course laying there on the gurney nervously awaiting surgery how could I refuse anything the Pro's suggested.

They took out My Pancreas, Gall Bladder, Spleen and part of my stomach and the reason was they couldn't get to my Pancreas otherwise. It didn't move it was still in the same place as when they scheduled the surgery, but it sure made it a lot easier for the Surgeon to just take it all, in his words make sure he got all of the Cancer., The Biopsy came back when I was still in the hospital and showed no Cancer.

But now I am a Diabetic and have to take Digestive Enzymes because I no longer have a Pancreas. Before I went to the Hospital. I previously had been diagnosed with Crohn's Disease and with the surgical complications and Crohn's Flare-ups I have constant stomach pain. I was prescribed pain medication, but all it did was make me lethargic and didn't really do much for the pain.

I had used Marijuana recreationally while I was younger, but had not used it in over 20 years. Then one night about two months out of the Hospital I caught my adult son using Marijuana late night in my garage. I thought he was just smoking cigarettes out there. Well anyway he asked if I would like to try some and I did a few days later and I was amazed at how it helped my stomach to calm and my appetite returned.

Since the Surgery I had lost around 75-80 lbs. and never really felt much like eating. I stopped losing weight and have been able to stay around 125-130lbs ever since then. I have to eat a lot because the Digestive Enzymes don't work as efficiently as the Pancreas does so to get the same amount of nourishment I have to eat more than when I weighed over 200 lbs., Believe me the so called munchies are a Godsend to me.

With the help Medical Marijuana is for my food intake it is just as good with reducing my stomach pain when I have the right strain. Yes I have found relief for my different ailments, but contrary to what some think, all marijuana is not the same and different strains can help different needs. That is one reason why I want to see patients have access to a variety of Strains of Marijuana.

Now what kind of person uses Medical Marijuana. Let me tell you what kind. Guys like me who have coached youth Sports for over twenty years and am involved in School activities where I take great pride in developing our future Leaders and in teaching our Youth what is important in life. My children attended parochial schools and participated in Youth sports where in both instances I was recruited to coach their teams because of my knowledge and caring attitude for our Youth.

So you see Medical Marijuana Patients are just like most people and want to be able to enjoy their lives, we just don't want to live with more pain than we have to and we want to still be able to participate in our society.

LeRoy E. Gibson Jr.

Proud USA Citizen

TO MY ELECTED MICHIGAN LEGISLATORS:

MY NAME IS MADGE PENELOPE MORGAN. I AM A 53 YEAR OLD REGISTERED NURSE AND A REGISTERED MEDICAL MARIJUANA PATIENT. I DEMAND THAT YOU DO THE JOB YOU WERE ELECTED TO DO, WHICH IS TO IMPLEMENT THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE. THE PROPOSED BILLS REGARDING THE MIMMA ARE THE WRONGFUL, PERSONAL DESIRES OF A FEW ELECTED OFFICIALS, ARE IN COMPLETE OPPOSITION OF WHAT THE PEOPLE VOTED FOR, AND THEY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. BILL SHUETTE IS ABUSING HIS POSITION AS MICHIGAN'S ATTORNEY GENERAL. HE IS TRYING TO FORCE HIS PERSONAL IDEOLOGY ON THE CITIZENS OF MICHIGAN. HE IS WRONG, HIS ACTIONS ARE CRIMINAL, AND HE AND HIS SUPPORTERS MUST BE STOPPED.

I WILL NOT TOLERATE BEING TREATED LIKE A CRIMINAL, I WILL NOT TOLERATE MY CIVIL RIGHTS BEING VIOLATED, AND I WILL NOT TOLERATE MY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES, WHO WORK FOR ME, TRYING TO PASS LAWS THAT HURT AND CRIMINALIZE ME. I AM AN ADULT, AND IT IS MY RIGHT TO CHOOSE HOW TO TREAT MY MENTAL AND PHYSICAL AILMENTS.

I HAVE A CHILDHOOD HISTORY OF PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, AND EMOTIONAL/MENTAL ABUSE, AND HAVE USED MARIJUANA MEDICINALLY SINCE THE AGE OF NINE. I SUFFERED A HEMORRHAGIC STROKE IN OCTOBER 2010 DUE TO AN ACCIDENTAL HEAD INJURY. I HAVE SOME LEFT SIDE PARALYSIS AND FLACCIDITY, AND ENDURE CONSTANT PAIN AND MUSCLE SPASMS. MARIJUANA IS A NATURAL MEDICINE THAT ALLEVIATES AND MAKES ALL MY HEALTH ISSUES BETTER. I CHOOSE NOT TO POISON MY BODY AND MIND WITH SYNTHETIC DRUGS THAT ARE MORE HARMFUL AND DEADLY TO ME THAN MY ACTUAL ILLNESSES.

WE, THE PEOPLE, DID NOT AGREE TO PASS LAWS MAKING MARIJUANA ILLEGAL AND THESE LAWS MUST BE ERADICATED. IT IS UNACCEPTABLE THAT MARIJUANA, A HERB THAT GROWS NATURALLY AND HAS BEEN USED MEDICINALLY BY HUMANS SINCE TIME BEGAN, IS ILLEGAL. IT IS UNACCEPTABLE THAT PEOPLE ARE BEING UNJUSTLY JAILED AND THEIR PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS STOLEN BY GOVERNMENT FORCES THAT COMPLETELY DISREGARD THESE FACTS. THIS IS AMERICA, NOT A DICTATORSHIP.

AS A REGISTERED NURSE, I CONSTANTLY SEE THE HORRIFIC NEGATIVE TOLL HABITUAL ALCOHOL USE AND PRESCRIBED SO-CALLED MEDICINES TAKE ON AN INDIVIDUALS PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING, THEIR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS, THEIR JUDGEMENT, AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ALTERED PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CAPABILITIES. I HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED NOT ONE PATIENT SEEKING OR NEEDING MEDICAL CARE DUE TO MARIJUANA USE.

UNTIL AND UNLESS THE SAME DEMANDS AND REQUIREMENTS ARE IMPLEMENTED FOR USERS OF ALCOHOL AND PRESCRIPTION ALLEGED MEDICATION, THAT ARE BEING PROPOSED FOR USERS OF MARIJUANA, THESE DICTATORIAL ACTIONS AND EFFORTS MUST CEASE AND DESIST. NOW.

MADGE PENELOPE MORGAN

P.S. - MY REHABILITATION DOCTOR, WHO HAD BEEN TREATING ME FOR 3 MONTHS AND WROTE A MONTHLY PRESCRIPTION FOR POWERFUL PAIN MEDS, REFUSED TO FILL OUT MY MEDICAL MARIJUANA PAPERWORK, LEAVING ME NO CHOICE BUT TO SEE A DOCTOR WHO WOULD FILL OUT MY PAPERWORK. I CARRY MY MEDICINE IN MY POCKET, MY BRA, OR MY PURSE. I COULD CARRY IT IN A BROWN PAPER BAG LIKE A BOTTLE OF ALCOHOL, OR IN A WHITE PAPER BAG LIKE PRESCRIPTION ALLEDGED MEDICINE.

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Michael McShane and I have a patient story for you. Here is the latest print publication of my tale.

Hope to be able to work with you on the project.

MM

<http://themidwestcultivator.com/marijuana-news-features/02-2012/healed-how-i-cured-my-cancer-with-cannabis>

HEALED: How I Cured My Cancer with Cannabis

By Charmie Gholson/Midwest Cultivator

This story is the first in a series exploring the curative powers of marijuana, told from the perspective of the people who say they have used it to heal themselves.

These claims are not a part of a formal study and have not been evaluated by a scientific panel. They are documented observations of the patient and his treating physician. The American Cultivator believes in relaying these stories, with the hope that more research will be forced to fruition and assist in the reduction of patient suffering from chronic illness.

Mike McShane has endured five bouts of Squamous cell carcinoma cancer. He's spent a million dollars and has been treated with radiation therapy, chemotherapy and surgery by this team of doctors at the Detroit Medical Center. Today, he believes the invasive treatments were unnecessary. He says he's cured his latest bout with the disease using a highly concentrated form of marijuana oil called Simpson Oil.

Michael McShane and Gersh Avery are hanging out in my office, chain smoking cigarettes and talking about Jesus.

"That may be why they hung him on that tree you know," Gersh says, waving his hand and sending a cascade of ashes across my desk. "What do you think was in that oil he was healing people with? It was cannabis."

Three years ago, I wouldn't have believed the so called, "healing properties of cannabis," but not today. Not with 51 year old McShane sitting across from me, grinning through the smoke and nodding his head. He's a rapt audience of one, sitting in the front pew in the church of healing.

25 years ago, McShane was diagnosed with HIV. This was the late 80's, when nothing was known about the disease. Doctors gave you an immediate death sentence.

"The opportunistic diseases that kill you with HIV are cancer and pneumonia," he says. "I went in with breathing problems and asking what time I was leaving. They said, 'you'll be lucky if you get out of here in two weeks alive.'"

"I felt a wheelchair bump me in the back of the legs, and heard, 'sit down sir,' then they wheeled me into an ICU isolated unit. Everybody had space suits on. Anyone who came into that room was dressed up like they were landing on the moon or ready to fight chemical warfare. They looked like Robby the Robot coming at me."

"There they were, my caregivers, all suited up and I'm thinking, 'man I must be super messed up.'"

The doctor came in and told McShane, "I'll give you six months to live. Do you have any questions?"



"He was really sarcastic," McShane says, adding that at that time, HIV was "The Gay" disease. "I was shaking and thinking what the hell? It was unbelievable."

McShane's first bout with cancer occurred a few years later. His doctors cut a wedge out of his lip. Soon after, he noticed a lump in his neck. He underwent radical neck surgery that removed part of his jugular vein. He also underwent radiation treatment.

"By the time they were done I couldn't talk, plus they cut the nerve in my neck. I had to learn how to talk again. The radiation they used on me was so strong it burned my throat."

A few years after the neck dissection, McShane experienced colon cancer, which resulted in surgery and chemotherapy. "The colon cancer was a pain in the ass," he laughs, "but it wasn't anything like the neck surgery."

After the colon issue McShane had a major outbreak of cancer in four areas on his face. They performed surgery on his forehead, both lips and cheek in a surgical suite, using local anesthetic while McShane was awake. He says he could feel everything and asked for more anesthesia.

The doctor would first removed tissue, then send it to a nearby lab for testing while McShane waited in the chair. He repeated this process until all the cancer was gone. By then, he had removed a substantial amount of Michael McShane's face.

He was rushed out through the back of the clinic. "I walked in looking normal and now it looked like a pipe bomb went off in my face," he says, "From a marketing perspective, they had me go out the back door."

After eight hours of reconstructive surgery, and another six procedures for scar revisions and lip clefts, McShane's oncology procedure was deemed successful.

In June of 2011, the cancer on his face returned, growing back in the same places where it had been surgically removed. By then he was growing marijuana, acting as a caregiver under the Medical Marijuana Act. McShane recalls a powerful, dawning moment of learning that marijuana cured cancer.

"There I was in the basement, with the plants growing, and the lights and fans humming. I couldn't believe it. The thought of curing my cancer with this oil was almost too much."

Avery lights another cigarette and laughs, as if not believing this oil cures cancer is just plain silly. He's co-founder of the Michigan Cannabis Cancer Project, an educational program that promotes and provides Simpson oil to anyone who needs it, at no cost. "It works," he says simply.

"I found out about this stuff through the medical marijuana community," McShane says. "I've made about 1,000 new friends since 2008. Without knowing you guys I would have never known about this oil and I would have died. That's no bullshit."

"I got Simpson oil and started putting it on and after ten days, ten days I saw it. The cancer started to break up before my eyes. It looked like a big white callous, and it started to fragment and break up."

"I was crying. It was unbelievable." He called his Dermatologist, told him the cancer was back and that he was treating it with marijuana.

McShane leaps from his chair in my office and starts dancing around, laughing. "Here I am, in my basement, with a 9th grade education and I'm healing my cancer, and I'm saying, 'I'm not going to spend 40 grand with you!'"

He went to his doctors office. "You've got cancer on your face," he told McShane. "I know," he responded. "That's the reason I'm here. I want you to put it in my chart and note it because when I come back I don't

think it'll be here. It's going to be gone because I'm using this marijuana oil." His doctor told him, "well ok, but get to Dermatology immediately. That's cancer."

McShane didn't go to Dermatology. He continued using the oil and the cancer started to lose the battle very quickly. It took about three months to reach the underneath layer of live skin. During that time he went to see his doctor about four times who said he could see things were getting better.

After three months of Simpson oil treatment, the cancer had broken down and exposed a layer of live skin. During that time McShane saw his doctor about four times, who confirmed his condition was improving.

In late August, McShane appeared on WWJ AM Radio, and also on Fox News Let It Rip where he squared off with Dr. Steven Newman, President of Michigan State Medical Society. A few weeks earlier Newman had stood next to Attorney General Bill Schuette at a press conference, decrying the medical marijuana bill as, "hijacked by pot profiteers who threaten public safety..."

McShane's dermatologist also interviewed with WWJ. He denied McShane was completely cured but said the cancer was 60 percent gone and that the results so far, "definitely warrant further scientific study for the use of cannabis for treating skin cancer." But after this interview, when other reporters called, his office issued the following statement. "We're not going to cooperate anymore."

When McShane went to see his doctor for his last visit, he expected him to proclaim a miracle.

"He took a look at my face and was amazed, but made no comments whatsoever, as if he really didn't know what to do. I think he got a phone call from Newman and had been 'talked to' because when he came into to look at me it was more of a political thing than a doctors exam."

"I said to him, 'Normally at this point you'd pull a knife on me. Is there any cause for concern?' and he said, 'No. You look great.' He asked to follow up at 16 weeks."

"He wasn't being a doctor. He was protecting the medical industry."

"It was the weirdest thing that's ever happened to me. I thought we'd be on Fox news and we'd have a parade down Woodward."

"With cancer it's a real fear-based system, a war based mentality, fueled by the fear of cancer and dying and the trilogy of the whole thing is your insurance; that's what makes it all work. I've been diagnosed and cut on within hours. It's all about coming at you with nuclear weapons and knives."

"They're sincere in their actions, they're just misinformed."

"They have known that this cures cancer since 1974, and all these things that have happen to me have been since 1974, which means I wouldn't have had to do any of the things I've had to do with western medicine, or the costs that are associated with it, if they had allowed research on cannabis."

"I cured myself in 90 days in my basement in Ferndale as a patient, come on we can get there in 10 years with labs. We did this! The potheads did it with a rice cooker." He and Avery are both laughing now.

"Come on," he says, "that's crazy."

When I last saw Mike McShane, he was working on healing his HIV with an intense 90 days treatment of Simpson oil. He says he has stopped taking his HIV treatment, which cost about \$2000 for one month. He said the only aspect of the treatment he was struggling with was sensitivity to light.

His cancer has not returned.

To Whom it May Concern;

I would like to offer my thanks and support to the Michigan Medical Marijuana Association. By speaking to you today they are representing me and I believe many other medical marijuana patients in this state. I have been asked to relate my use and experience with medical marijuana.

During my lifetime I have experienced a great deal of pain arising from various afflictions that are only getting worse as I travel at light speed to old age. I have been under a physician's care for pain mitigation over a significant portion of my life. In the past ten years I have had my spine fused and both knees replaced because of the damage caused by arthritis. Arthritis continues to cause me sever pain requiring medication beyond which one can purchase without a prescription. The most effective analgesics unfortunately are opiates. That class of medicine causes problems with my COPD and makes me sick when I take enough for pain relief. Without pain control I have a very difficult time getting the proper amount of sleep. I discussed my options with my doctor. I then visited and subsequently underwent therapy administered by a pain management specialist. The results were marginal, limited to four procedures per year, and cost prohibitive from a co-pay stand point. I remembered when I was younger and experimented with marijuana in my college days. I noticed it offered a great deal of relief for my already, even at that time, painful knees I have been using medical cannabis for a little more than a year now. During this time I have also noticed my blood pressure is very easy to control in addition to the pain relief offered. I have never experienced more complete pain relief than I have with cannabis. I get all of these benefits with none of the side effects of the opiates. I have shared some but not all of my ailments with you. I have made this effort so that everyone is aware of my and I am certain others concern for some of the proposed changes. If there is a need to verify any of my medical claims please feel free to contact me. It makes me feel very vulnerable when rules can be changed in what I consider an arbitrary manner. The Michigan Medical Marijuana Association represents my viewpoint on this matter and I believe others.

Yours

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Hello, and thank you for this opportunity and honor to appear before you today. My name is Patrick and I'm a 38 yr old med marijuana patient. For 25 yrs I've suffered with severe Crohns disease, endured multiple surgeries, and been prescribed every narc available. I also suffer from chronic pain due to spinal stenosis and cervical dystonia. I live in pain everyday but am still a productive, participating member of society. I credit this to marijuana. Although I still take low dose narcotics when my pain gets out of control marijuana helped me endure and I've found taking small amounts of oil concentrate is the most effective way to keep my ulcers in remission. Marijuana helped me stay healthy enough to attain my bachelors degree which then led to gainful employment.

Unfortunately the past few yrs my health has declined but I still try to stay productive by being involved with the Kalamazoo Area Compassion Club. I am currently a proud board member of a club well known for helping people with any information they are looking for regarding med marijuana. We inform the public about current laws, how to find legal caregivers, and basically just try to help any way we can. I must emphasize we are not a dispensary!! and use of meds at our meetings is strictly prohibited!. We are an information resource for the public. That's why we employ you to hear us today and please hear what we are saying. Compassion Clubs such as ours are a good, necessary thing to have available to those people who are looking for help. We also give back to our community through food bank donations, YWCA womens shelter donations, Kalamazoo holiday parade participants, and the Kalamazoo Animal Shelter. There is a definite need for compassion clubs like ours as evident by our 400 members, and giving back to the community helps everybody!! Please don't restrict us or deem us illegal. We are people just trying to do what is right and good. Passionately following our beliefs. Just like you are people just trying to do to what is right and good. Together we can find a solution  
Again, thank you

Patrick Pesegna  
treasurer  
Kalamazoo Area Compassion Club  
269-870-5727

Hello my name is Paul and I'm a patient and a caregiver. I'd like to address the bona fide Dr./patient relationship. I'm one of Jerry's kids, that is I have one of the 40 neuromuscular disorders that fall under the umbrella of the Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Association. I was diagnosed when I was 8 years old, I've had multiple major reconstructive surgeries on both feet starting when I was 13. I recently underwent lumbar fusion surgery. I have been on prescription pain relievers all of my adult life starting with 800 mgs of Ibuprofen 3 times/day, side effects include stomach damage. I progressed to an opiate/acetaminophen combination, side effects of prolonged use of Tylenol (acetaminophen) include liver damage.

When I found that cannabis could provide major pain relief and was relatively non toxic I was overjoyed and applied to the MDCH for a medical marihuana card. When my doctor found out that I was a registered medical marihuana patient he started checking my urine. At one point I went 34 days without cannabis so I could pass the urine test, but because I told him I still wanted to be able to use cannabis he sent me a letter stating that, "... this shall serve as formal notice that I am withdrawing as your personal physician. As I explained in our last visit, I am unable to prescribe the medications you want while you are using marijuana."

I have a copy of the urinalysis showing no trace of cannabis in my system at the time of the visit. But merely because I expressed the fact that I wanted to use cannabis he kicked me to the gutter. During our conversation I discovered that he had no knowledge of the endocannabinoid system.

I feel that patients should not be punished for their doctors failures and instead doctors should be required to take the AMA accredited (medical marijuana) continuing education program put on by The University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine (UCSF)

(can be found at <http://www.medicalcannabis.com/>).

Also , as to HB xxxx. One of my clients was told by the police, in my presence, that they couldn't bring a child into my home because it was, "an unsafe environment". I would like to address the issue of police being required to take sensitivity training regarding our law instead of being given greater access to our records to make it easier for them to target us.

I feel that both of these issues are possible violations of the MI Handicappers Civil Rights Act. MCL 37.1102 and MCL 37.2505.

Since becoming a registered medical marihuana patient my civil rights have been repeatedly violated both by law enforcement and my physician.

Thank you.

I am Paul Singer and my 60 year old younger brother is Tom Singer. He has been diagnosed with MS since he was in his early twenties and I was diagnosed in 2007 at the age of 57.

Brother Tom is now almost to the point where he is bedridden. He lives in Ann Arbor and has used medical marihuana for many years. Years ago the Federal Government supplied the drug to him in round canisters. This was probably back in the 1970's or 1980's. Since they discontinued that program for him he obtained the drug illegally for many years. Luckily he lived in Ann Arbor where help was available and marijuana was easy to obtain. A policeman lived across the hall from him in his building and never bothered Tom once they met.

My father was a B-17 pilot in WW2 flying 35 missions over the English Channel to bomb Germany. He was a very conservative man politically, but he witnessed how Tom's muscle spasms ceased when Tom smoked marihuana. He supported Tom's use of the drug and was not bothered by Tom smoking in his presence. If my our had not passed away he would speak for Tom and his personal freedom to do what was necessary to ease his symptoms and make his life easier. It's funny but when dad was in hospice he did not want the powerful medicines as he did not want to become addicted.

Tom has been cared for by physicians at the University of Michigan for many years. They support his use of medical marihuana. They supply his other drugs as well, including baclofen administered via a surgically implanted pump. But marihuana is, so far, his best drug for the uncontrollable spasms he gets from time to time and for relaxation in general. Most drugs he takes advise not to use alcohol, but are silent on marihuana.

My experience with MS is somewhat different than Tom's in that I am not as immobile as he is. I have incredible fatigue that is easily worsened by any kind of moving. I can still take walks and drive, but I am quite limited on how far I can walk before my right leg drags. I have a brace for footdrop on the right leg and it works well until I am tired (about 1/4 mile is my limit most days). I have spasticity too and it seems to vary from day to day. I have made about 50 or more changes to this note as I cannot tell exactly where my fingers are going to hit. But I get by OK.

I have issues with cognition. I used to be able to keep track of much more than I can now. I have trouble following recipes these days, whereas before, I could keep track of and remember many more things. That mental loss and the fatigue cost me my last job .

I take many drugs. I used to take a drug called Rebif via injection. It cost about \$ 3,000 a month for Rebif, but I have good insurance so I paid \$ 40/ month. But Rebif made me feel poorly for a day after I took it, so I quit taking it. Most of what I take now says to avoid alcohol. So I use marihuana to help with spasticity as my brother does and for relaxation/pleasure. Like many Americans I was familiar with the drug from my youth, so it was no surprise to me that it would help me feel better.

So now my local Co-op has been busted and my caregiver moved to Grand Rapids. I cannot get marihuana easily anymore and I have real fears that I will be busted if I try to get some here in my local Traverse City area. I worry that the person that sells it to me will be busted too. All this has happened after I went to the local Elmwood Township Board and pleaded for zoning changes to allow the Co-op to exist. I went before the Leelanau County zoning committee and presented my view as well. And like the majority of voters in Leelanau County voted for the law as it is currently written, these seperate political entities agreed that our county and township should make medical marihuana available.

And none of us want to see the drug get into the hands of kids. And while there are some who want to legalize the drug entirely, most of us just want the medical use approved. Most of us are not for the big business approach taken by some growers and distributors. But the medicine should not be hard to get legally. Tom has felt this way for many years and I agree with his viewpoint. And keeping the expense down is preferred.

The current attorney general is doing some good things with his new powers. I especially like the help one can get as a consumer on-line and via mail for help with billing practices and abuses of companies.

His office has helped my sustain my rights against Dish Network and AT&T for what I think are illegal billing practices. But his efforts to make my use of medical marihuana impossible or more difficult are bothersome. My viewpoint is that Michiganders want medical marihuana legal and easy to get. His efforts should be directed in that direction and not toward looking for ways to deny medical marihuana's use.

Thank You.

Paul Singer

I have a degenerative spinal condition that causes pain 24 hours a day, every day. At times the pain levels can go off the charts. This condition has cost me my job and the active life that I had known. It has driven me to over a dozen different doctors and therapists, spinal fusion surgery, and filling at least 20 various prescriptions for general pain, nerve pain, muscle spasms, anxiety, constipation, diarrhea, stomach cramps, and sleep problems.

Like anyone dealt this hand, I felt I should try my best to get the most out of the time I had left here but the pain was just overwhelming. For nearly a year I treated this problem with pills - painkillers, muscle relaxers, and sleeping medications. I was able to keep my sanity largely because I was barely conscious most of the days. I was just trying to get through this time.

Given the permanence of my disease, it struck me one day that 'just trying to get through this time' really meant I'd be semiconscious for the rest of my life. I was desperate to find another course of treatment. Doing some research online, I learned about the MMMA and how medical grade cannabis was able to help people with pain from damaged nerves.

For me, the change was dramatic. Powerful cannabis was able to turn down the volume on my pain signals. I have been able to nearly eliminate the pills that I had become dependent upon. I am now able to actually participate in my life again. I know the cannabis won't cure my condition but I am now able to live as opposed to just existing. I think my wife is happier now too living with a husband rather than a zombie.



Dear State Representative:

I am a 4th generation Michigander, and third generation military. (grandfather WW1, father WW2, and I fought in Viet Nam) I am also a third generation auto worker. I have never been arrested or detained for any reason.

In 1991 an injury changed my life, leaving me to suffer in pain, from a herniated disc. It has left me totally and permanently disabled. In the beginning, all pain management was done with codeine and NSAIDs. After taking Vioxx for 2 years, when it was taken off the market, because it caused heart problems. I was also on Hydrocodone-750 but they caused constipation, and turned me into a vegetable, unable to function at a normal level. So I had to stop that one also. I was then given Celebrex, I broke out in hives, 75 in all with blisters covering my body.

My doctor and I were discovering that I was not able to take any prescription drugs to ease my pain. He suggested that I might try medical marihuana. It has allowed me to live a fairly normal life. The medical marihuana is an effective pain management tool that does not cause the severe side effects prescription drugs do.

I am also a caregiver for a 55 year old man, that has had a severe spinal problem for 10 years. He was being treated with morphine, codeine and NSAIDs. These drugs had turned him into a vegetable, causing him to become morbidly obese. He had no energy to get up and move about. A year ago he weighed near 400 lbs! I took him on as a patient, with a promise that if the marihuana helped, he would stop the prescription drugs. He was put on methadone for a while to help with the withdrawals he would experience with getting off the narcotics. This was done with his doctor's instruction and guidance. I can now report that he is managing his pain about 90% with medical marihuana. His weight is dropping and he is experiencing a renewed ambition. The medical marihuana has given him a new lease on life. His wife thanks me every chance she gets, that I have given her back her husband.

His doctor has prescribed leaf caplets for his condition, which has nothing to do with smoking it or getting high. There are many other beneficial chemicals in this plant, not just the THC, that are easing the CAUSE of his pain. I know several cases that people are being helped with medical marihuana.

I voted for this law in 2008 as did 62% of Michigan voters. A recent poll of Americans says over 50% of us feel it should be legal. We Michiganders have spoken! You work for us. It's not your job or the states Attorney General to change the laws to suit yourself.

Often in the news I see articles of the elderly being robbed for their prescription meds, and drug stores being broken into for the drugs, and meth labs popping up all over the state. But, all the while our attorney general is on an aggressive campaign to teach local law enforcement officers how to skirt the law and arrest legal medical marihuana patients on some technicality. He is attempting to force his personal opinion on the citizens of Michigan.

I have been keeping my ear to the ground, wanting to know what social impact this law's change will have on our state, and it's economy and citizens.

This is only my opinion; but this is what I see:

1. The street pot was drying up, those are the dealers that don't care if you have a Medical Marihuana card or you are just a kid looking to get high. They were loosing their customers, they didn't have product to sell. But since the crackdown on dispensaries and compassion clubs the street drugs have returned and the money is going to the Mexican cartel, when it could be going back into local businesses.
2. 60,000 jobs were created by this law!! This is just the dispensaries and compassion club employees, this does not include businesses that make their money off of those that grow, advertise, rent, and supply or otherwise have an interest in the medical marihuana business. When has any government official brought in 60k new jobs in the blink of an eye? And in this economy I would think any respectable business would be welcome. I do agree that some control is needed, I don't want to see 40 plus compassion clubs within sight of the capitol building.

I look back in history and see small logging towns, with and excessive amount of bars or saloons. This is the American way. Good business practice and attrition got the bars down to one or two per small town now. This will happen with dispensaries and compassions clubs also, if allowed to take their course, but our attorney general has not let this take place, even knowing that this "is the American way".

3. I can see the extreme efforts our AG is using to change the law, the very one, we the people, voted for. He is not doing the will of the people or even his job effectively from where I sit. He is supposed to be protecting it's citizens but instead he is terrorizing legal medical marihuana patients, to force his agenda on us. I often ponder if big pharma is in his ear, or is he trying to get into good graces with the republican

party? Only time will tell.

Regulate the law, but don't change it. In my opinion we would have seen 80% of the compassion clubs around the state close, that's the American way. The ones that would succeed would have been the honest, caring shop owners, like their piers, selling coffee, hardware and the necessities of life.

Our A G and some state legislators are hell bent to apply their will on some 140,000 registered patients, with more applying every day. This puts us in fear of this type of law enforcement. That is not what we the people voted for. We are honest, God fearing, law abiding Michigan voters - and our Attorney General and you work for us. Do the will of your citizens please.

Sincerely,

Robert Ladd

# **The benefits of using Marijuana as medicine**

I was diagnosed with attention deficit disorder at the early age of four. My mother used coffee/ caffeine as a homeopathy remedy for this and of course it worked. It worked for most of my life. I did other things to maintain my anxiety by running track, and other sports like tennis. I needed to stay active to stay sane basically. I continued to excel in school using caffeine and exercise as medication for my issues. Although, I still bite my nails. I was still an Honor Role and National Honor Society student.

When you have ADD, Anxiety, and Hypertension, you learn to live with my so called disability. Which I see as all curable with marijuana. So, I went on to college at The Art Institute of Chicago, which in 1991 was the third best fine art college in the country. I had eighteen credits a semester and a full load Fashion design degree.

Also, a major in fine art. In my first year I failed first semester fine art history class. I was devastated as I had to obtain certain grade points for the scholarships I had. I had tutors and night class which was difficult. During this time I had a sense and perception science class in which I did a study on the social use of marijuana. As I studied this plant I also was part of the study. In my research finding that my concentration level was amazing and I was able to pass everything. I would not have graduated College if I had not medicated with marijuana.

After college I became stressed to a level that went through the roof. Not being able to medicate because marijuana use was not legal. I had a nervous break down and was told I needed to stop and cleanse my body. Eventually, I had acquired psoriasis as related to the nervous break to my system. I started treating my self with reiki and acupuncture for the disease. I now have psoriatic arthritis and fibromyalgia. This condition is not even a problem for me when treated with marijuana.

Living with ADD became a gift as long as I was medicated with marijuana. My productivity level increased as I have three careers. And now a fourth career, as a massage therapist helping people develop a lifestyle design of their own. While maintaining their self preservation.

I believe in Marijuana and its tremendous Health properties. I believe in the gifts this plant bestows on our land. It is important to use this plant for our medicinal uses, as well as a natural resource to regain our economy and our freedom to choose it as such.

Sincerely,

Rose Sanchez

Lifestyle Designer & Self Preservationist

To whom it may concern

My name is Scot Woods and I'm a medical cannabis patient and caregiver. I'm writing you today to testify on how Cannabis has helped my life and the lives of my very ill patients. I use Cannabis for pain and to help with my nerve damage and spinal cord damage that I've had since 1986. I have seen countless Doctors for years which they all wanted me to take high doses of morphine of which I did for years. The drugs they prescribed left me unable to function or work so I tried Cannabis. First thing I noticed was the burning pain in my back stopped. So I tried it again and again the burning spot stopped burning which had never happened with any of the drugs the doctors gave me. So,, I stopped using the morphine and only used the Cannabis which I've done for years. This changed my life completely as I could now work with out sever pain. I was able to function and live a better life and not just stay in the house drugged out of my mind on morphine.

I now care for 5 very ill patients and have seen the diffrents cannabis has made in there lives as they have stopped most if not all of their prescribed drugs. I do not profit from caring for them besides helping them to live a better life. My payment is the hugs I've gotten from their children as they had gotten their Dad back and grand parents back. That kind of payment is worth far more then and cash they could have given me.

The bills before you will only hurt me and all my patients as the state refuses to do what we voted into law in 2008. You are looking to change the law and you have yet to even do the simplest thing the law requires which is to get the folks their cards in time or let them use the protections the law affords the ill in court. You have done nothing but made us live in utter fear for our lives. You would better serve the people of our state by demanding the law the people voted for was followed, not by trying to change it so a few can profit from the law. This is wrong and you all need to think about this before you hurt the weakest people in our state.

You should be helping us in demanding we have our cards in time so we don't get arrested for using the safest drug on the planet. Jail and being harassed is no way to treat someone that is ill or dying. You should follow the law we the people voted into law and not just change it so a few can profit. I urge you to kill the bills and demand that the law be followed. This is what the people of our state except and demand.

Thank you for allowing me to tell you my story and explain how this law effects my patients and club members. I'm also the Exec Dir of the Berrien County Compassion Club which has over 500 members in the club at this time. I talk and see the issues these folks face every day and they all want you to demand that the law we voted for be followed and that you do not change ANYTHING in the law. We just want the law followed and to be left alone period. It really is as simple as that.

Thank you  
Scot Woods  
Exec Dir  
BCCC

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Sheila Bird and here is my story; in 1994, I was in two car accidents. First one my neck was herniated and the second car accident those herniated discs ruptured. C5-C6 and C6-C7. one year later I went with the operation because I couldn't stand the pain anymore. It took one year and one month for it to heal. I continued to have pain in my neck and shoulders until 2004.

At this time in 2004, I got worse. I was working 45 to 60 hours a week and I started having lots of accident, such as sprang ankle or wrist, twisting diverse muscles, and lots of cuts. My body hurt all the time, like I was bruised but no bruising. My manager at that time told me I need to get to a doctor and see what was wrong with me. That doctor told me I had fybro and sent me to some specialists. Found out that degenerative disc disease had eaten my discs in my neck and spread through the rest of my back bones. There was no sign of the fused bone in those disc's. Then chronic fiteque. Now, let me tell you that after I had my second daughter in 1981, I developed chronic Irritable Bowel Syndrome. It was like having another child every time I went to the bathroom. Then later in years, I went on Pygests and Ribifiron for my liver in 2005 and was so severely sick I lost 50 lbs for the 4 months I was on it. I have not recovered sense but been getting worse by the years.

I quit smoking marijuana when I was 19 years old and I am now 56 year old. I did not like the way it was making my body feel. In 2008 the bill came out that medically we could get on it, but I was too afraid. I was hospitalized in 2010 for an over dose of Tylenol. My liver was not sifting through the Tylenol in the narco's. Also, I have been taking sleeping pills for about 26 years. So I had to make some changes and in 2011 I decided I would try medical marijuana. Hoping that the brands grown in containment buildings would not have the junk that was in street stuff.

Sure enough, it's cleaner and smoother. It does not hurt my body. I am off narco's and the other drugs as well including the sleeping pills. I use my medical marijuana in food. I do not not smoke it very often.

The pain from my IBS (irritable bowel syndrome) is now gone. My sister Shawn Gardner has not seen me walk without a cain or walker sense 2005 and it is 2012 now. I still have pain in my back, neck, and shoulders, but at least I can walk now and go to the bathroom every day....(YaY) without chronic pain.

Please do not take away my new life style. I can take walks now. And travel without having to stop extra times because of my bathroom problems that I use to have. I sleep very well considering the amount of years i couldn't without sleeping pills.

Thank you for taking the time in reading my testimony.

Sheila Bird  
Roscommon, MI

Feb 20th 2012

From: Steve Harris, Iron Mountain, Michigan

To: Politicians who would suppress the results of a legal election

My name is Steve Harris and I suffer from chronic arthritis due to playing high school and college sports and am in constant pain.

Pain meds like vicodin work somewhat for me ----but they are horribly addictive and destroy the internal organs such as the liver and kidneys.

Marihuana is the only substance that safely eases my pain and effects abilities such as driving much less than the vicodin type drugs

I am shocked that there are those who will defy the will of the people (which was decided by popular vote...) by actions designed to make the MMA law ineffectual.

PLEASE reconsider if you are one of those attempting to subvert the law because of your own beliefs. Your time would be better spent and serve the people better if you concentrated on challenging the law via the election process.

Sincerely,

Steve Harris

My name is Steven Posigian and I'm a 41 year old Christian Father, Husband, and life long resident of Michigan. I have been suffering from chronic lower back pain and other related issues stemming from an on the job injury. In 1992 I underwent a surgery known as a partial laminectomy to my lower back (L5-S1 left side) and a second partial laminectomy in 1994 (L5-L4 left side). This life changing injury left me with nerve damage related to my lower left extremities and bowels. Despite the cards I'd been dealt at such a young age I was blessed with a path in life that enabled me to prosper, contribute to society, and I learned to manage my pain through that of seed in which God has provided us all.

At the age of 14 my Father died from Cancer leading my all ready physiologically distraught Mother of two into a DEEPER Depression and before long she was involved with medical and mental health professionals for a varied of psychotropic medications for Manic Depression, Schizoid Affective, and vicodin for her chronic back pain. Despite attempts at having normalcy in her life the demons she faced in her mind along with her physical disabilities kept her from moving on in life without some supervision and assistance. I'm the one left to care for her but I have no involvement in her medical or mental health care. So early on I was made to watch a slippery slope of prescription abuse by both the patient and the doctors because my Mother was fooled into believing in the power of the prescription pad and poisons are all that medicine has to offer. Over time the medications have done her more harm than good both physically and physiologically. I believe they have made it wore by pickling her brain and it's also contributed to the deterioration of many of her internal organs. To say my Mother has been a zombie at times would best describe how debilitating these pharmaceutical poisons' can be to the human body in stark contrast to that of Marijuana.



After my first surgery in 1992 I was prescribed everything from vicodin to Tylenol\_3's for pain and believe me I was in PAIN! I was also TERRIFIED of the prescription pad! I had not only witnessed the effects of its poisons in my Mother but also her brother (my closet Uncle and new male figure in my life) and I knew it wasn't what I wanted for myself. I used it when I truly had too but it was rare and I was often questioned by my Neurosurgeon and Physical Therapists why I wasn't using it to help manage my pain. I would explain that being numb and sedated is not how I want to live the rest of my days and I wanted nothing to do with the chemicals produced by the drug manufactures. It was at this time in my life that my neighbor, mentor, and friend 20 years my senior suggested marijuana as a much healthier alternative to managing my pain. I had experimented with marijuana a time or two as a teen but it was not something I was even remotely involved with at the time. My friend however was well versed in holistic and all natural remedies including marijuana. He took the time to educate me and suddenly I found myself entering a whole new world void of the poisons that I feared most.

Over the years my pain has not been totally debilitating but it is chronic. By the grace of God and the use of marijuana I've been able to work in order to provide for my family, I've enjoyed a life free of poisons, and I've always managed to stand on my own without being a burden to society. Marijuana has allowed me to take charge of my life and my health in many ways but it's a way of life that constantly threatens my freedom. My chosen medicine wasn't easy to obtain because the markets are black and possession could have me wearing orange. I'm not a criminal and I have no criminal record yet some officials are determined to make all of us believers in this beautiful and abundant plant into inmates. What I AM is an excellent example of a highly functioning Marijuana user who has benefited from its use and I've done it all while remaining an asset to society. In 2008 I stood with 63% of our Great State in voting in the Medical Marijuana Act thus alleviating some of my fears

of incarceration and it was replaced with Hyhopes for the future of a plant whose healing power is just starting to show us it's potential.

This is a condensed version of my story to share with everyone how marijuana has been used to manage my own personal physical pain and how I've suffered watching prescriptions drugs destroy my loved ones. Prescription drugs are the real poison yet it's easy to obtain, it's more widely abused than marijuana yet its legal to posses, and marijuana is a very healthy option for thousands of people yet authorities continue to ignore the Medical Marijuana Act of 2008 making access to desperately needed medicine impossible. I've had enough of "storm trooper" tactics by law enforcement and the lack of common sense in our opposition. It's a simple law in need of a simple understanding, but due to the lack of proper education the public still has a general fear of the unknown, and today I'm asking the leaders of this Great Lakes State for some common sense help. The Medical Marijuana Law needs to be enforced in full by those on both sides of the fence. Access needs to be streamlined and simplified! Not complicated with loop holes and excuses that serve only to infringe on our rights with overwhelmingly wasteful expense to the tax payer and sometimes the destruction of families. Please embrace this opportunity to see the blessing that is marijuana and choose to be a part of something wonderful by helping us find acceptable solutions to a chaotic situation that is causing too much unnecessary suffering. I AM but one seed growing in the light of God's love and I know not what his plan is; but we are all a part of it!

## Testimony for Judicial Committee Hearings

I have systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), an incurable auto-immune disease that causes me to have skin lesions, arthritis, light sensitivity and eye problems. I see several physicians for this condition, my internist of 16 years, a dermatologist, a rheumatologist, a gastroenterologist and an ophthalmologist.

I am 63, retired as computer consultant, county administrator, college instructor, drug educator, crisis trainer.

Pharmaceutical medicines commonly used to treat SLE caused me severe allergic and life-threatening reactions. I have known for decades that cannabis is harmless compared to other legal and illegal drugs, so I am pleased it works for me.

I grow cannabis for me, and for three other people. They are all retired professional people. They have MS, breast cancer, and a combination of MS and breast cancer. Thinking of them, the proposed legislation before the Judicial committee is overly jealous and mean-spirited.

I see no evidence of a need for these laws. They are in conflict with the referendum that passed by 63% of Michigan voters. Where are the problems?

I see no benefits from these laws. More pressing issues deserve your attention.

I see great harm from these laws. People will suffer. People you know.

In particular, I think HB 4834 requiring a photograph is an unnecessary financial burden on citizens, and a bureaucratic burden for the state. Current rules for sharing information with police are already in place. This legislation seems aimed at harassing people.

I think HB 4851 requiring a “bona fide physician-patient relationship” is unnecessary state meddling in a citizen’s right to seek medical care. In addition to my long-serving internist, I see several specialists. I don’t think they need the state dictating how to work together. I know most people are not as fortunate as me. This proposed law is insensitive to the plight of people with chronic health conditions.

HB 4853 is unnecessary and vague. This sort of penalty was not approved by voters.

HP 4856 should be in line with similar compounds, like prescription drugs and alcohol. Medical marijuana transport is an insignificant problem, and doesn’t deserve special rules and scrutiny by the legislature.

In closing, please don’t waste your time, counter the will of the people, and harass people who are sick. It is unbecoming of your office.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Sylvia Dulaney  
11200 Bacon Road  
Plainwell, MI 49080

Hello, my name is Tim Ratliff

I am a caregiver and patient, I suffer from silent migraines that get so severe I have gone to the emergency room. I have had a CAT scan and MRI done at Troy Beaumont, at first they thought I had a stroke but after testing they diagnosed me with silent migraines. I live in Lapeer County where McLaren health system doesn't allow their doctors to prescribe medical marijuana to any of their patients no matter what the doctors belief is. For this reason I have to go to a doctor that is not my primary doctor to get a prescription. When I use the medical marijuana my symptoms like nausea and sensitivity to light go away. Without having a choice of medical marijuana I would still be suffering from my symptoms because the other scripts that I had tried in the past had given worsening symptoms especially nausea. I had never used this wonderful herb until after I had gotten sick. I couldn't imagine life without it now. I have had very few migraines since I started medical use of marijuana.

IT HAS GIVEN ME MY LIFE BACK!

Thanks

p.s. feel free to fact check me!

Hello

MMJ has saved my life! I know this may sound far out to some folks, but its true, or close. Prior to the 2008 MMM Act, passed by a 2/3rds vote, I was taking my Dr. prescribed medications as recommended. I never abused them, or asked for them early. Simply, I am Not a drug abuser!

My choice of medication back then was Methadone. Because I had lost my insurance when I became unable to work any longer due to a bad lower back and other deminished conditions (double carpal tunnels operations etc..)

My pain had become so bad that I was up to 12 tablets a day of the methadon. A MAN SIZED DOSE as my Doctor often called it. A man KILLER sized dose is closer to it. After several yrs of taking these pills, I had grown to 300 pounds, I was lethargic and the palest white color to my skin. Worse than normal as I am fair skinned. I fumbled for words all the time. My children (ages 8, 22 and 26) felt they were losing their father. My wife felt it would not be long before she' would lose her husband. and the father of our 8 yr old.

Since MMJ was voted on by the good Citizens of Michgan, I have been able reduced my methadone from 12 tabs daily, to 4, and am presently working on making that 3, with the controlled use of medical cannabis. Perhaps it is possible to cut the methedone dose to 2?

My children all say they have their father back!!! I will live to see my 8 yr old become an adult as his siblingss have. I will be there for him as any father would hope to be. God strike me dead if Im lying or even stretching the truth, MMJ HAS SAVED MY LIFE.  
Thank You for your time,

Tim Rennick

## My Story for Legislation Speak

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Vicki Nicholls. I am a lifetime resident of Macomb County, Michigan. I am a taxpayer and homeowner. I am also a Michigan Medical Marijuana Patient Cardholder.

I was diagnosed with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis at the age of eighteen months old. Rheumatoid Autoimmune Disease, as it has been re-named, is a progressive, often fatal disease in which the immune system attacks the body's healthy tissue. Along with destroying the body's joints, it also attacks the heart, lungs and digestive track and causes severe chronic fatigue. I am so grateful to still be here to speak to you today.

As a two-year old, the doctors had me taking seventeen baby aspirin per day. The dose continued to increase throughout my early years. By the time I was twelve years old, Naproxen was the "new" drug on the market. I was on Naproxen for the next fifteen years. I excelled in school despite my agonizing pain. I was determined to graduate from college, and I did, from Oakland University. I got my Certified Public Accountant license and had a great career for eight years. After having bi-lateral hip replacement surgery at the young age of twenty-seven, I continued to work full-time.

My disease kept progressing. By the age of thirty, I developed Degenerative Disc Disease and Colitis, which are a direct result of the Rheumatoid Autoimmune Disease. This was the final straw. My doctor put me on disability. I was crushed. During the last ten years I have been on chemotherapy and biologic treatments for the Rheumatoid Autoimmune Disease and Colitis. The Colitis finally went into remission about three years ago, but the Rheumatoid Autoimmune Disease is still progressing.

About a year ago, I was in dire straits. I could no longer afford the skyrocketing co-pays for all the prescriptions I had to take. The co-pay for my biologic medicine was one thousand dollars per month. Along with have to get epidurals in my cervical spine, I was on twelve prescriptions including the painkiller Fentanyl. My hands were so swollen, I could no longer drive or even hold a cup. My neck felt like someone was stabbing me over and over again. I was then introduced to cannabis oil at a local dispensary. After using the cannabis oil on my hands for only a few days, the swelling disappeared. My doctor was amazed. He actually called my fingers, "skinny". I also use cannabis orally for pain control. I have reduced my prescriptions needed from twelve to five. I am happy to report I have not had a major flare in months.

I do not use medical marijuana to get "high". I am not a "stoner". This plant is a miracle for me, not an illicit drug. Please consider my story for any legislative changes to the Michigan Medical Marijuana Act.

Vicki Nicholls  
Michigan Medical Marijuana Patient Cardholder

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I am the 63%.

On November 4, 2008, I was one of the over 3 million Michigan voters who voted to approve the use of cannabis for medicinal purposes. I knew what I was voting for.

I have always believed that the government should not interfere with individual rights or states rights.

4 years ago, my husband convinced me that I should go to the doctor to try to figure out what was causing my symptoms.

I suffered from muscle spasms, muscle tremors, chronic back pain, urinary track infections, vertigo, depression, anxiety, headaches, blurred vision, mood swings, inability to regulate body temperature, decreased appetite, heart palpitations, fainting without warning, numbness & tingling, et cetera.

I was shuffled from doctor to doctor ending in "ology". I had everything from full blood work ups to holter monitors to brain scans.

I would be pre-diagnosed & offered pharmaceutical medications. Narcotics, Muscle relaxers, sleep medication, anti-anxiety, anti-depression, anti-vomiting, antibiotics. Later, I found I did not suffer from any of their pre-diagnosis. I did not suffer from RA, Lupus, MS, Fibro. I was repeatedly told that my blood work came back "normal" and I would be back to the starting board.

At the end of December 2011, I had enough. I went to my primary care provider and demanded that my situation be taken seriously and my medical records be looked at in full to complete the puzzle. More blood work was ordered for possible RA. I was told after the results came back that I did not suffer from RA & that my blood work showed slightly lower levels of b12, to take over the counter supplements for the b12 levels to increase, an anti-seizure medication for my spasms, and to come back in 6 months if I did not feel better.

I went to a Medical Marijuana Certification Clinic. I refused to take all of the drugs my doctor offered me to mask my current symptoms and inevitably riddle me with new ones. After meeting with the doctor, I was told after thoroughly looking through only a tenth of my medical records, that I have a b12 deficiency, that over the counter supplements will not help, that injections are needed, and that is probably the underlying cause of some of my issues. I was treated like a human being, instead of a cash cow, and send home with a certification for my muscle spasms & severe, chronic pain.

I began researching b12 deficiency & my total medical history. Prolonged deficiency of b12 can result in any or all of the symptoms I listed above along with others like dementia, liver damage, and many others. After looking over my records, there were three parts of my blood work that were red flags in each and every blood workup: b12, iron, & infection levels.

I called my doctor's office several times in the last 2 days; they won't return my calls.

I called a different doctor in my area and he said that with a level of only 130 (b12) with the low end of the normal levels being at 180 and the rate in which b12 decreases, I have suffered from undiagnosed b12 deficiency for a long time. He agreed with the certification doctor that I need injections to raise levels & prevent further damage. He also told me that any symptoms that have become apparent during that time will continue; my body is permanently damaged due to the lack of b12.

I am choosing to use medical cannabis instead of taking 8 different prescriptions.

Because of negligence on my primary care providers end, I will now suffer for the rest of my life.

Because of both of those things, and Reefer Madness in our government, I could potentially be labeled as a criminal.

A criminal because of something that was in my blood work that no one cared to actually evaluate.

I am a mother of 4, step mother of 3, active in my childrens schooling, active in their extra curriculans, proud owner of 2 pitbulls, charity contributor, girlfriend, sister, and friend. I am a law-abiding citizen of Michigan for my entire life. I pay my taxes & I vote in every election. I often wear sweats and no makeup (like today). I spend my days helping with homework and covered in spit up. I am NOT a criminal.

It's time that our government wakes up.

I refuse to be jailed because I am trying to heal myself from the issues caused to due incompetence in our local medical community.

I refuse to have to explain to my children that if the law changes that at any time the police can conduct a warrantless search of our home. I shouldn't have to explain that mommy is sick & not a criminal.

I shouldn't have to be without the only thing that has been medically researched & proven to alleviate my serious symptoms. My children should not have to go their childhoods with me bedridden & ill.

I am the face of a Medical Marijuana Patient.

I am the 63%.